

School Edition

THE WORKS
OF
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

POET LAUREATE

IN FOUR PARTS

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TO THE QUEEN.

*Revered, beloved—O you that hold
A nobler office upon earth
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth
Could give the warrior kings of old,*

*Victoria,—since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;*

*And should your greatness, and the care
That yokes with empire, yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there ,*

*Then—while a sweeter music wakes,
And thro' wild March the thrasonic calls,
Where all about your palace-walls
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—*

*Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long,*

*And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day !
May children of our children say,
' She wrought her people lasting good ,*

*' Her count was pure ; her life serene ;
God gave her peace , her land reposed ;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen ;*

*' And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet*

*' By shaping some august decree,
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'*

JUVENILIA.

CLARIBEL.

A MELODY.

I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose-leaves fall :
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel low-lieth.

II.

At eve the beetle boometh
Athwart the thicket lone :
At noon the wild bee hummeth
About the moss'd headstone :
At midnight the moon cometh,
And looketh down alone.
Her song the lute-white swelleth,
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,
The callow throistle lispeth,
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,
The babbling rannel crispeth,
The hollow grot replieth
Where Claribel low-lieth.

NOTHING WILL DIE

WHEN will the stream be aweary of
flowing
Under my eye ?
When will the wind be aweary of blowing
Over the sky ?

When will the clouds be aweary of
fleeting ?
When will the heart be aweary of
beating ?
And nature die ?
Never, oh ! never, nothing will die ;
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud fleets,
The heart beats,
Nothing will die.

Nothing will die ;
All things will change
Thro' eternity.
'Tis the world's winter ;
Autumn and summer
Are gone long ago ;
Earth is dry to the centre,
But spring, a new comer,
A spring rich and strange,
Shall make the winds blow
Round and round,
Thro' and thro',
Here and there,
Till the air
And the ground
Shall be fill'd with life anew

The world was never made ;
It will change, but it will not fade.
So let the wind range ;
For even and morn
Ever will be
Thro' eternity.
Nothing was born ;
Nothing will die ;
All things will change.

ALL THINGS WILL DIE.

CLEARLY the blue river chimes in its
flowing

Under my eye ;
Warmly and broadly the south winds are
blowing

Over the sky.
One after another the white clouds are
fleeting ;
Every heart this May morning in joyance
is beating

Full merrily ;
Yet all things must die.
The stream will cease to flow ;
The wind will cease to blow ;
The clouds will cease to fleet ;
The heart will cease to beat ;
For all things must die.

All things must die.
Spring will come never more.

Oh ! vanity !
Death waits at the door.
See ! our friends are all forsaking
The wine and the merrymaking.
We are call'd—we must go.
Laid low, very low,
In the dark we must lie.
The merry glees are still ;
The voice of the bird
Shall no more be heard,
Nor the wind on the hill

Oh ! misery !
Hark ! death is calling
While I speak to ye,
The jaw is falling,
The red cheek paling,
The strong limbs failing ;
Ice with the warm blood mixing ;
The eyeballs fixing.
Nine times goes the passing bell :
Ye merry souls, farewell.

The old earth
Had a birth,
As all men know,
Long ago.
And the old earth must die.
So let the warm winds range,
And the blue wave beat the shore ;

For even and morn
Ye will never see
Thro' eternity.
All things were born.
Ye will come never more,
For all things must die.

LEONINE ELEGIACS.

LOW-FLOWING breezes are roaming the
broad valley dimm'd in the gloaming :
Thoro' the black-stemm'd pines only
the far river shines.
Creeping thro' blossomy rushes and bowers
of rose-blowing bushes,
Down by the poplar tall rivulets babble
and fall.
Barketh the shepherd-dog cheerly ; the
grasshopper carolleteth clearly ;
Deeply the wood-dove coos ; shrilly the
owllet halloos ;
Winds creep ; dews fall chilly : in her
first sleep earth breathes stilly :
Over the pools in the burn water-gnats
murmur and mourn.
Sadly the far kine loweth : the glimmer-
ing water outfloweth :
Twin peaks shadow'd with pine slope to
the dark hyaline
Low-throned Hesper is stayed between
the two peaks ; but the Naiad
Throbbing in mild unrest holds him
beneath in her breast.
The ancient poetess singeth, that Hes-
perus all things bringeth,
Smoothing the wearied mind : bring me
my love, Rosalind.
Thou comest morning or even ; she
cometh not morning or even.
False-eyed Hesper, unkind, where is my
sweet Rosalind ?

SUPPOSED CONFESSIONS

OF A SECOND-RATE SENSITIVE MIND.

O GOD ! my God ! have mercy now.
I faint, I fall. Men say that Thou

Didst die for me, for such as *me*,
 Patient of ill, and death, and scorn,
 And that my sin was as a thorn
 Among the thorns that girt Thy brow,
 Wounding Thy soul.—That even now,
 In this extremest misery
 Of ignorance, I should requirè
 A sign ! and if a bolt of fire
 Would rive the slumbrous summer noon
 While I do pray to Thee alone,
 Think my belief would stronger grow !
 Is not my human pride brought low ?
 The boastings of my spirit still ?
 The joy I had in my freewill
 All cold, and dead, and corpse-like grown ?
 And what is left to me, but Thou,
 And faith in Thee ? Men pass me by ;
 Christians with happy countenances—
 And children all seem full of Thee !
 And women smile with saint-like glances
 Like Thine own mother's when she bow'd
 Above Thee, on that happy morn
 When angels spake to men aloud,
 And Thou and peace to earth were born.
 Goodwill to me as well as all—
 I one of them : my brothers they :
 Brothers in Christ—a world of peace
 And confidence, day after day ;
 And trust and hope till things should cease,
 And then one Heaven receive us all.

How sweet to have a common faith !
 To hold a common scorn of death !
 And at a burial to hear
 The creaking cords which wound and eat
 Into my human heart, when'er
 Earth goes to earth, with grief, not fear,
 With hopeful grief, were passing sweet !

Thrice happy state again to be
 The trustful infant on the knee !
 Who lets his rosy fingers play
 About his mother's neck, and knows
 Nothing beyond his mother's eyes.
 They comfort him by night and day ;
 They light his little life away ;
 He hath no thought of coming woes,
 He hath no care of life or death ;
 Scarce outward signs of joy arise,
 Because the Spirit of happiness

And perfect rest so inward is ;
 And loveth so his innocent heart,
 Her temple and her place of birth,
 Where she would ever wish to dwell,
 Life of the fountain there, beneath
 Its salient springs, and far apart,
 Hating to wander out on earth,
 Or breathe into the hollow air,
 Whose chillness would make visible
 Her subtil, warm, and golden breath,
 Which mixing with the infant's blood,
 Fulfils him with beatitude.
 Oh ! sure it is a special care
 Of God, to fortify from doubt,
 To arm in proof, and guard about
 With triple-mailed trust, and clear
 Delight, the infant's dawning year.

Would that my gloomed fancy were
 As thine, my mother, when with brows
 Propt on thy knees, my hands upheld
 In thine, I listen'd to thy vows,
 For me outpour'd in holiest prayer—
 For me unworthy !—and beheld
 Thy mild deep eyes upraised, that knew
 The beauty and repose of faith,
 And the clear spirit shining thro' .
 Oh ! wherefore do we grow awry
 From roots which strike so deep ? why
 dare

Paths in the desert ? Could not I
 Bow myself down, where thou hast knelt,
 To the earth—until the ice would melt
 Here, and I feel as thou hast felt ?
 What Devil had the heart to scathe
 Flowers thou hadst rear'd—to brush the
 dew

From thine own lily, when thy grave
 Was deep, my mother, in the clay ?
 Myself ? Is it thus ? Myself ? Had I
 So little love for thee ? But why
 Prevail'd not thy pure prayers ? Why
 pray

To one who heeds not, who can save
 But will not ? Great in faith, and strong
 Against the grief of circumstance
 Wert thou, and yet unheard. What if
 Thou pleadest still, and seest me drive
 Thro' utter dark a full-sail'd skiff,
 Unpiloted i' the echoing dance

Of reboant whirlwinds, stooping low
Unto the death, not sunk ! I know
At matins and at evensong,
That thou, if thou wert yet alive,
In deep and daily prayers would'st strive
To reconcile me with thy God.
Albeit, my hope is gray, and cold
At heart, thou wouldest murmur still—
'Bring this lamb back into Thy fold,
My Lord, if so it be Thy will.'
Would'st tell me I must brook the rod
And chastisement of human pride ;
That pride, the sin of devils, stood
Betwixt me and the light of God !
That hitherto I had defied
And had rejected God—that grace
Would diop from his o'er-brimming love,
As manna on my wilderness,
If I would pray—that God would move
And strike the hard, hard rock, and thence,
Sweet in their utmost bitterness,
Would issue tears of penitence
Which would keep green hope's life.
Alas !

I think that pride hath now no place
Nor sojourn in me. I am void,
Dark, formless, utterly destroyed.

Why not believe then ? Why not yet
Anchor thy frailty there, where man
Hath moor'd and rested ? Ask the sea
At midnight, when the crisp slope waves
After a tempest, rib and fret
The broad-imbed beach, why he
Slumbers not like a mountain tarn ?
Wherefore his ridges are not curls
And ripples of an inland mere ?
Wherefore he moaneth thus, nor can
Draw down into his vexed pools
All that blue heaven which hues and paves
The other ? I am too forlorn,
Too shaken : my own weakness fools
My judgment, and my spirit whurls,
Moved from beneath with doubt and fear.

'Yet,' said I, in my morn of youth,
The unsunn'd freshness of my strength,
When I went forth in quest of truth,
'It is man's privilege to doubt,

If so be that from doubt at length,
Truth may stand forth unmoved of change,
An image with profulgent brows,
And perfect limbs, as from the stoim
Of running fires and fluid range
Of lawless airs, at last stood out
This excellence and solid form
Of constant beauty. For the Ox
Feeds in the herb, and sleeps, or fills
The horned valleys all about,
And hollows of the fringed hills
In summer heats, with placid lows
Unfearing, till his own blood flows
About his hoof. And in the flocks
The lamb rejoiceth in the year,
And raceth freely with his fere,
And answers to his mother's calls
From the flower'd furrow In a time,
Of which he wots not, run short pains
Thro' his warm heart ; and then, from
whence

He knows not, on his light there falls
A shadow ; and his native slope,
Where he was wont to leap and climb,
Floats from his sick and filmed eyes,
And something in the darkness draws
His forehead earthward, and he dies.
Shall man live thus, in joy and hope
As a young lamb, who cannot dream,
Living, but that he shall live on ?
Shall we not look into the laws
Of life and death, and things that seem,
And things that be, and analyse
Our double nature, and compare
All creeds till we have found the one,
If one there be ?' Ay me ! I fear
All may not doubt, but everywhere
Some must clasp Idols Yet, my God,
Whom call I Idol ? Let Thy dove
Shadow me over, and my sins
Be unremember'd, and Thy love
Enlighten me. Oh teach me yet
Somewhat before the heavy clod
Weighs on me, and the busy fret
Of that sharp-headed worm begins
In the gross blackness underneath.

O weary life ! O weary death !
O spirit and heart made desolate !
O damned vacillating state !

THE KRAKEN.

BELOW the thundeis of the upper deep ;
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep
The Kraken sleepeth : faintest sunlights
flee

About his shadowy sides : above him swell
Huge sponges of millennial growth and
height ;

And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous grot and secret
cell

Unnumber'd and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering
green.

There hath he lain for ages and will lie
Battening upon huge seaworms in his
sleep,

Until the latter fire shall heat the deep ;
Then once by man and angels to be seen,
In roaring he shall rise and on the sur-
face die.

SONG.

THE winds, as at their hour of birth,
Leaning upon the ridged sea,
Breathed low around the rolling earth
With mellow preludes, ' We are free.'

The streams through many a lilled row
Down-carolling to the crisped sea,
Low-tinkled with a bell-like flow
Atween the blossoms, ' We are free.'

LILIAN.

I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Claps her tiny hands above me,
Laughing all she can ;
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian.

II.

When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs,
She, looking thro' and thro' me
Thoroughly to undo me,
Smiling, never speaks :
So innocent-auch, so cunning-simple,
From beneath her gathered wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughs dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks ;
Then away she flies.

III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !
Gaiety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian :
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth
When from crimson-threaded lips
Silver-tieble laughter trilleth :
Prythee weep, May Lilian.

IV.

Praying all I can,
If prayers will not hush thee,
Airy Lilian,
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
Fairy Lilian.

ISABEL.

I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over-bright,
but fed
With the clear-pointed flame of chastity,
Clear, without heat, undying, tended by
Pure vestal thoughts in the trans-
lucent fane
Of her still spirit ; locks not wide-dispread,
Madonna-wise on either side her
head ;
Sweet lips whereon perpetually did
reign
The summer calm of golden charity,
Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,
Revered Isabel, the crown and head,
The stately flower of female fortitude,
Of perfect wifehood and pure lowli-
head.

II.

The intuitive decision of a bright
And thorough-edged intellect to part
Error from crime ; a prudence to
withhold ;

The laws of marriage character'd in
gold

Upon the blanched tablets of her heart ;
A love still burning upward, giving light
To read those laws ; an accent very low
In blandishment, but a most silver flow

Of subtle-paced counsel in distress,
Right to the heart and brain, tho' undes-
cried,

Winning its way with extreme gentle-
ness

Thro' all the outworks of suspicious pride ;
A courage to endure and to obey ;
A hate of gossip pailance, and of sway,
Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life,
The queen of marriage, a most perfect
wife.

III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon ;
A clear stream flowing with a muddy one,
Till in its onward current it absorbs
With swifter movement and in purer
light

The vexed eddies of its wayward
brother :

A leaning and upbearing parasite,
Clothing the stem, which else had
fallen quite

With cluster'd flower-bells and am-
bro-sial orbs

Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on each
other—

Shadow forth thee :—the world hath
not another

(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of
thee,

And thou of God in thy great charity)
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

MARIANA.

'Mariana in the moated grange'

Measure for Measure.

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all ;
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange :
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.

She only said, ' My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said ;
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !'

Her tears fell with the dews at even ;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried ;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.

After the fitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did tiance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.

She only said, ' The night is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said ;
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !'

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :
The cock sung out an hour ere light :
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her : without hope of change,
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed
morn

About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, ' The day is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said ;
She said, ' I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead !'

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marsh-mosses crept.

Hard by a poplar shook alway,
 All silver-green with gnarled bark :
 For leagues no other trees did mark
 The level waste, the rounding gray.

She only said, 'My life is dreary,
 He cometh not,' she said ;
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,
 I would that I were dead !'

And ever when the moon was low,
 And the shrill winds were up and away,
 In the white curtain, to and fro,
 She saw the gusty shadow sway.
 But when the moon was very low,
 And wild winds bound within their cell,
 The shadow of the poplar fell
 Upon her bed, across her brow.

She only said, 'The night is dreary,
 He cometh not,' she said ;
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,
 I would that I were dead !'

All day within the dreamy house,
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;
 The blue fly sung in the pane ; the mouse
 Behind the mouldering wainscot
 shriek'd,

Or from the crevice peer'd about.
 Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,
 Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
 Old voices called her from without.

She only said, 'My life is dreary,
 He cometh not,' she said ;
 She said, 'I am weary, weary,
 I would that I were dead !'

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
 The slow clock ticking, and the sound
 Which to the wooing wind aloof
 The poplar made, did all confound
 Her sense ; but most she loathed the hour
 When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
 Athwart the chambers, and the day
 Was sloping toward his western bower.

Then, said she, 'I am very dreary,
 He will not come,' she said ;
 She wept, 'I am weary, weary,
 Oh God, that I were dead !'

TO ———.

I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful scorn,
 Edged with sharp laughter, cuts atwain
 The knots that tangle human creeds,
 The wounding cords that bind and strain
 The heart until it bleeds,
 Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn
 Roof not a glance so keen as thine :
 If aught of prophecy be mine,
 Thou wilt not live in vain.

II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;
 Falsehood shall bare her plaited brow ;
 Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now
 With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.
 Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords
 Can do away that ancient lie ;
 A gentler death shall Falsehood die,
 Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,
 Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,
 Thy kingly intellect shall feed,
 Until she be an athlete bold,
 And weary with a finger's touch
 Those writhed limbs of lightning speed ;
 Like that strange angel which of old,
 Until the breaking of the light,
 Wrestled with wandering Israel,
 Past Yabbok brook the livelong night,
 And heaven's mazed signs stood still
 In the dim tract of Penuel.

MADELINE.

I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,
 No tranced summer calm is thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.
 Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,
 Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
 Delicious spites and darling angers,
 And airy forms of fitting change.

II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,
 Thou art perfect in love-lore.
 Revelings deep and clear are thine
 Of wealthy smiles. but who may know
 Whether smile or frown be fleetest?
 Whether smile or frown be sweeter,
 Who may know?

Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow
 Light-glooming over eyes divine,
 Like little clouds sun-fringed, are thine,
 Ever varying Madeline.

Thy smile and frown are not aloof
 From one another,
 Each to each is dearest brother;
 Hues of the silken sheeny woof
 Momently shot into each other.
 All the mystery is thine;
 Smiling, frowning, evermore,
 Thou art perfect in love-lore,
 Ever varying Madeline.

III.

A subtle, sudden flame,
 By veering passion fann'd,
 About thee breaks and dances
 When I would kiss thy hand,
 The flush of anger'd shame
 O'erflows thy calmer glances,
 And o'er black brows drops down
 A sudden-curved frown:
 But when I turn away,
 Thou, willing me to stay,
 Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest;
 But, looking fixedly the while,
 All my bounding heart entanglest
 In a golden-netted smile;
 Then in madness and in bliss,
 If my lips should dare to kiss
 Thy taper fingers amorously,
 Again thou blushest angerly;
 And o'er black brows drops down
 A sudden-curved frown.

SONG—THE OWL.

I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,
 And dew is cold upon the ground,

And the far-off stream is dumb,
 And the whirring sail goes round,
 And the whirring sail goes round;
 Alone and warming his five wits,
 The white owl in the belfry sits.

II.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
 And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
 And the cock hath sung beneath the
 thatch
 Twice or thrice his roundelay,
 Twice or thrice his roundelay;
 Alone and warming his five wits,
 The white owl in the belfry sits,

SECOND SONG.

TO THE SAME.

I.

THY tuwhits are lull d, I wot,
 Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,
 Which upon the dark afloat,
 So took echo with delight,
 So took echo with delight,
 That her voice untuneful grown,
 Wears all day a fainter tone.

II.

I would mock thy chaunt anew;
 But I cannot mimick it;
 Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
 Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,
 With a lengthen'd loud halloo,
 Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tuwhoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew
 flee
 In the silken sail of infancy,
 The tide of time flow'd back with me,
 The forward-flowing tide of time;
 And many a sheeny summer-morn,
 Adown the Tigris I was borne,

By Bagdat's shrines of fletted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old ;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue :
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broader'd sofas on each side :
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard
The outlet, did I turn away
The boat-head down a broad canal
From the main river sluiced, where all
The sloping of the moon-lit sward
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
Adown to where the water slept.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night
I enter'd, from the clearer light,
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the
dome
Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.
From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rillels musical,
Thro' little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountain's flow
Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.

A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn
A walk with vary-colour'd shells
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tarsi, fed the time
With odour in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
In closest coverture upsprung,
The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he sung ;
Not he • but something which possess'd
The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Ceasing not, mingled, unexpress'd,
Apart from place, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were ranged
Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :
A sudden splendour from behind
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, counterchanged
The level lake with diamond-plots
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
Grew darker from that under-flame :
So, leaping lightly from the boat,
With silver anchor left afloat,
In marvel whence that glory came
Upon me, as in sleep I sank
In cool soft turf upon the bank,
Entranced with that place and time,
So worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—
 A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
 And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
 Full of the city's stilly sound,
 And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
 The stately cedar, 'tamarisks,
 Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
 Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
 Graven with emblems of the time,
 In honour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares
 From the long alley's latticed shade
 Emerged, I came upon the great
 Pavilion of the Caliphate.
 Right to the carven cedarn doors,
 Flung inward over spangled floors,
 Broad-based flights of marble stairs
 Ran up with golden balustrade,
 After the fashion of the time,
 And humour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fonscore windows all alight
 As with the quintessence of flame,
 A million tapers flaring bright
 From twisted silvers look'd to shame
 The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
 Upon the mooned domes aloof
 In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
 Hundreds of crescents on the roof
 Of night new-risen, that marvellous time
 To celebrate the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
 Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
 Serene with argent-lidded eyes
 Amorous, and lashes like to rays
 Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
 Tressed with redolent ebony,
 In many a dark delicious curl,
 Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone;
 The sweetest lady of the time,
 Well worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
 Pure silver, underpropt a rich
 Throne of the massive ore, from which

Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
 Engarlanded and diaper'd
 With wrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
 Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stir'd
 With merriment of kingly pride,
 Sole star of all that place and time,
 I saw him—in his golden prime,
 THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID.

ODE TO MEMORY.

ADDRESSED TO —

I.

THOU who stealest fire,
 From the fountains of the past,
 To glorify the present; oh, haste,
 Visit my low desire!
 Strengthen me, enlighten me!
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

II

Come not as thou camest of late,
 Flung the gloom of yesternight
 On the white day; but robed in soften'd
 light
 Of orient state
 Whilome thou camest with the morning
 mist,
 Even as a maid, whose stately brow
 The dew-impearled winds of dawn have
 kiss'd,
 When, she, as thou,
 Stays on her floating locks the lovely flight
 Of overflowing blooms, and earliest shoots
 Of orient green, giving safe pledge of fruits,
 Which in wintertide shall star
 The black earth with brilliance rare.

III.

Whilome thou camest with the morning
 mist,
 And with the evening cloud,
 Showering thy gleaned wealth into my
 open breast
 (Those peerless flowers which in the
 rudest wind
 Never grow sere,

When rooted in the garden of the mind,
 Because they are the earliest of the year).
 Nor was the night thy shroud.
 In sweet dreams softer than unbroken rest
 Thou leddest by the hand thine infant
 Hope.
 The eddying of her garments caught from
 thee
 The light of thy great presence ; and the
 cope
 Of the half-attain'd futurity,
 Tho' deep not fathomless,
 Was cloven with the million stars which
 tremble
 O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy.
 Small thought was there of life's distress ;
 For sure she deem'd no must of earth
 could dull
 Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and
 beautiful .
 Sure she was nigher to heaven's spheres,
 Listening the lordly music flowing from
 The illimitable years.
 O strengthen me, enlighten me !
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,
 Thou of the many tongues, the myriad
 eyes !
 Thou comest not with shows of flaunting
 vines
 Unto mine inner eye,
 Divinest Memory !
 Thou wert not nursed by the waterfall
 Which ever sounds and shines
 A pillar of white light upon the wall
 Of purple cliffs, aloof descried :
 Come from the woods that belt the gray
 hill-side,
 The seven elms, the poplars four
 That stand beside my father's door,
 And chiefly from the brook that loves
 To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,
 Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
 Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
 In every elbow and turn,
 The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland,
 O ! hither lead thy feet !

Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat
 Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled
 folds,
 Upon the ridged wolds,
 When the first matin-song hath waken'd
 loud
 Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,
 What time the amber morn
 Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung
 cloud.

v.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye
 To the young spirit present
 When first she is wed ;
 And like a bride of old
 In triumph led,
 With music and sweet showers
 Of festal flowers,
 Unto the dwelling she must sway.
 Well hast thou done, great artist Memory,
 In setting round thy first experiment
 With royal frame-work of wrought
 gold ;
 Needs must thou dearly love thy first
 essay,
 And foremost in thy various gallery
 Place it, where sweetest sunlight falls
 Upon the storied walls ;
 For the discovery
 And newness of thine art so pleased thee,
 That all which thou hast drawn of fairest
 Or boldest since, but lightly weighs
 With thee unto the love thou bearest
 The first-born of thy genius. Artist-like,
 Ever retiring thou dost gaze
 On the prime labour of thine early days :
 No matter what the sketch might be ;
 Whether the high field on the bushless
 Pike,
 Or even a sand-built ridge
 Of heaped hills that mound the sea,
 Overblown with murmurs harsh,
 Or even a lowly cottage whence we see
 Stretch'd wide and wild the waste enor-
 mous marsh,
 Where from the frequent bridge,
 Like emblems of infinity,
 The trenched waters run from sky to sky,
 Or a garden bower'd close

With platted alleys of the trailing rose,
 Long alleys falling down to twilight grots,
 Or opening upon level plots
 Of crowned lilies, standing near
 Purple-spiked lavender :
 Whither in after life retired
 From brawling storms,
 From weary wind,
 With youthful fancy re-inspired,

We may hold converse with all forms
 Of the many-sided mind,
 And those whom passion hath not blinded,
 Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.

My friend, with you to live alone,
 Were how much better than to own
 A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !

O strengthen me, enlighten me !
 I faint in this obscurity,
 Thou dewy dawn of memory.

SONG.

I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours
 Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers :
 To himself he talks ;
 For at eventide, listening earnestly,
 At his work you may hear him sob and
 sigh
 In the walks ;
 Earthward he boweth the heavy
 stalks
 Of the mouldering flowers :
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
 Over its grave ! ' the earth so chilly ;
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
 As a sick man's room when he taketh
 repose
 An hour before death ;
 My very heart faints and my whole soul
 grieves
 At the moist rich smell of the rotting
 leaves,

And the breath
 Of the fading edges of box beneath,
 And the year's last rose
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
 Over its grave ! ' the earth so chilly ;
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

A CHARACTER.

WITH a half-glance upon the sky
 At night he said, ' The wanderings
 Of this most intricate Universe
 Teach me the nothingness of things.'
 Yet could not all creation pierce
 Beyond the bottom of his eye.

He spake of beauty : that the dull
 Saw no divinity in grass,
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air ;
 Then looking as 'twere in a glass,
 He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his hair,
 And said the earth was beautiful.

He spake of virtue : not the gods
 More purely, when they wish to charm
 Pallas and Juno sitting by :
 And with a sweeping of the arm,
 And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,
 Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour
 He canvass'd human mysteries,
 And trod on silk, as if the winds
 Blew his own praises in his eyes,
 And stood aloof from other minds
 In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,
 Himself unto himself he sold :
 Upon himself himself did feed :
 Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,
 And other than his form of creed,
 With chisell'd features clear and sleek.

THE POET

THE poet in a golden clime was born,
 With golden stars above ;
 Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn
 of scorn,
 The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good
and ill,

He saw thro' his own soul,
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he
threaded

The secretest walks of fame :
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were
headed
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver
tongue,

And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which
bore

Them earthward till they lit ;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field
flower,
The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing forth
anew

Where'er they fell, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance,
grew
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
The winged shafts of truth,
To throng with stately blooms the breath-
ing spring
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with
beams,

Tho' one did fling the fire.
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many
dreams
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
world

Like one great garden show'd,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark
upcurl'd,
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise
Her beautiful bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burning
eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
Sunn'd by those orient skies ;
But round about the circles of the globes
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in
flame

WISDOM, a name to shake
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
And as the lightning to the thunder
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No
sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his*
word
She shook the world.

THE POET'S MIND.

I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind
With thy shallow wit .
Vex not thou the poet's mind ;
For thou canst not fathom it.
Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river ;
Bright as light, and clear as wind.

II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear ;
All the place is holy ground ;
Hollow smile and frozen sneer
Come not here.
Holy water will I pour
Into every spicy flower
Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it around.
The flowers would faint at your cruel
cheer.

In your eye there is death,
 There is frost in your breath
 Which would blight the plants.
 Where you stand you cannot hear
 From the groves within
 The wild-bird's din.
 In the heart of the garden the merry bird
 chants.
 It would fall to the ground if you came
 in.
 In the middle leaps a fountain
 Like sheet lightning,
 Ever brightening
 With a low melodious thunder ;
 All day and all night it is ever drawn
 From the brain of the purple mountain
 Which stands in the distance yonder .
 It springs on a level of bowery lawn,
 And the mountain draws it from Heaven
 above,
 And it sings a song of undying love ;
 And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and
 full,
 You never would hear it ; your ears are
 so dull ;
 So keep where you are : you are foul with
 sin ;
 It would shrink to the earth if you came
 in.

THE SEA-FAIRIES.

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
 Betwixt the green brink and the running
 foam,
 Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms
 priest
 To little haips of gold ; and while they
 mused
 Whispering to each other half in fear,
 Shril music reach'd them on the middle
 sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither
 away ? fly no more.
 Whither away from the high green field,
 and the happy blossoming shore ?
 Day and night to the billow the fountain
 calls :

Down shower the gambolling waterfalls
 From wandering over the lea :
 Out of the live-green heart of the dells
 They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,
 And thick with white bells the clover-hill
 swells

High over the full-toned sea :
 O hither, come hither and furl your sails,
 Come hither to me and to me :
 Hither, come hither and folic and play ;
 Here it is only the mew that wails ;
 We will sing to you all the day :
 Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,
 For here are the blissful downs and dales,
 And merrily, merrily carol the gales,
 And the spangle dances in bight and bay,
 And the rainbow forms and flies on the
 land

Over the islands free ;
 And the rainbow lives in the curve of the
 sand ;

Hither, come hither and see ;
 And the rainbow hangs on the poisoning
 wave,

And sweet is the colour of cove and cave,
 And sweet shall your welcome be .

O hither, come hither, and be our lords,
 For merry brides are we :

We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak
 sweet words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten

With pleasure and love and jubilee :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten

When the sharp clear twang of the golden
 chords

Runs up the ridged sea.

Who can light on as happy a shore

All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?

Whither away ? listen and stay : mariner,
 mariner, fly no more.

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.

LIFE and Thought have gone away

Side by side,

Leaving door and windows wide :
 Careless tenants they !

II.

All within is dark as night :
In the windows is no-light ;
And no murmur at the door,
So frequent on its hinge before.

III.

Close the door, the shutters close,
Or thro' the windows we shall see
The nakedness and vacancy
Of the dark deserted house.

IV.

Come away : no more of mirth
Is here or merry-making sound.
The house was builded of the earth,
And shall fall again to ground.

V.

Come away : for Life and Thought
Here no longer dwell ;
But in a city glorious—
A great and distant city—have bought
A mansion incorruptible.
Would they could have stayed with us !

THE DYING SWAN.

I.

THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,
Wide, wild, and open to the air,
Which had built up everywhere
An under-roof of doleful gray.
With an inner voice the river ran,
Adown it floated a dying swan,
And loudly did lament.
It was the middle of the day.
Ever the weary wind went on,
And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.

Some blue peaks in the distance rose,
And white against the cold-white sky,
Shone out their crowning snows.
One willow over the river wept,
And shook the wave as the wind did sigh ;
Above in the wind was the swallow,

Chasing itself at its own wild will,
And far thro' the marsh green and still

The tangled water-courses slept,
Shot over with purple, and green, and yellow.

III.

The wild swan's death-hymn took the soul
Of that waste place with joy
Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear
The warble was low, and full and clear ;
And floating about the under-sky,
Prevailing in weakness, the coronach
stole

Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;
But anon her awful jubulant voice,
With a music strange and manifold,
Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;
As when a mighty people rejoice
With shawms, and with cymbals, and
harps of gold,
And the tumult of their acclaim is roll'd
Thro' the open gates of the city afar,
To the shepherd who watcheth the even-
ing star.

And the creeping mosses and clambering
weeds,
And the willow-branches hoar and dank,
And the wavy swell of the soughing
reeds,
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing
bank,
And the silvery marsh-flowers that
throng
The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.

A DIRGE.

I.

Now is done thy long day's work ;
Fold thy palms across thy breast,
Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest
Let them rave.
Shadows of the silver birch
Sweep the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

II

Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;
Nothing but the small cold worm
Fietteth thine enshrouded form.

Let them rave.

Light and shadow ever wander
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

III.

Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;
Chaunteth not the brooding bee
Sweeter tones than calumny ?

Let them rave.

Thou wilt never raise thine head
From the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

IV.

Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;
The woodbine and eglare
Drip sweeter dew than traitor's tear.

Let them rave.

Rain makes music in the tree
O'er the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

V.

Round thee blow, self-pleached deep,
Bramble roses, faint and pale,
And long purples of the dale.

Let them rave.

These in every shower creep
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

VI.

The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;
The frail bluebell peereth over
Rare broidry of the purple clove.

Let them rave.

Kings have no such couch as thine,
As the green that folds thy grave.

Let them rave.

VII.

Wild words wander here and there :
God's great gift of speech abused
Makes thy memory confused :

But let them rave.

The balm-cricket carols clear
In the green that folds thy grave.
Let them rave.

LOVE AND DEATH.

WHAT time the mighty moon was gather-
ing light

Love paced the thymy plots of Paradise,
And all about him roll'd his lustrous eyes ;
When, turning round a cassia, full in view,
Death, walking all alone beneath a yew,
And talking to himself, first met his
sight :

' You must begone,' said Death, ' these
walks are mine.'

Love wept and spread his sheeny vans
for flight ;

Yet ere he parted said, ' This hour is
thine '

Thou art the shadow of life, and as the
tree

Stands in the sun and shadows all be-
neath,

So in the light of great eternity
Life eminent creates the shade of death ;
The shadow passeth when the tree shall
fall,

But I shall reign for ever over all.'

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

MY heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.

There is no rest for me below,
Oriana.

When the long dun wolds are ribb'd with
snow,

And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow,
Oriana,

Alone I wander to and fro,
Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,
Oriana,

At midnight the cock was crowing,
Oriana :

Winds were blowing, waters flowing,
We heard the steeds to battle going,
 Oriana ;
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,
 Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,
 Oriana,
Ere I rode into the fight,
 Oriana,
While blissful tears blinded my sight
By star-shine and by moonlight,
 Oriana,
I to thee my troth did plight,
 Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,
 Oriana :
She watch'd my crest among them all,
 Oriana .
She saw me fight, she heard me call,
When forth there stept a foeman tall,
 Oriana,
Atween me and the castle wall,
 Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,
 Oriana :
The false, false arrow went aside,
 Oriana :
The damned arrow glanced aside,
And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,
 Oriana !
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,
 Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,
 Oriana.
Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,
 Oriana.
Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,
The battle deepen'd in its place,
 Oriana ;
But I was down upon my face,
 Oriana.

They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
 Oriana !
How could I rise and come away,
 Oriana ?

How could I look upon the day ?
They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
 Oriana—
They should have trod me into clay,
 Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,
 Oriana !
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,
 Oriana !
Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears run down my cheek,
 Oriana :
What wantest thou? whom dost thou seek,
 Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,
 Oriana.
Thou comest atween me and the skies,
 Oriana.
I feel the tears of blood arise
Up from my heart unto my eyes,
 Oriana.
Within thy heart my arrow lies,
 Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !
 Oriana !
O happy thou that liest low,
 Oriana !
All night the silence seems to flow
Beside me in my utter woe,
 Oriana.
A weary, weary way I go,
 Oriana.

When Norland winds pipe down the sea,
 Oriana,
I walk, I dare not think of thee,
 Oriana.
Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,
I dare not die and come to thee,
 Oriana.
I hear the roaring of the sea,
 Oriana.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbour villages
Playing mad pranks along the heathy leas ;

Two strangers meeting at a festival ;
 Two lovers whispering by an orchard
 wall ;
 Two lives bound fast in one with golden
 ease ;
 Two graves grass-green beside a gray
 church-tower,
 Wash'd with still rains and daisy blos-
 somed ;
 Two children in one hamlet born and
 bred ;
 So runs the round of life from hour to
 hour.

THE MERMAN.

I.

WHO would be
 A merman bold,
 Sitting alone,
 Singing alone
 Under the sea,
 With a crown of gold,
 On a throne ?

II.

I would be a merman bold,
 I would sit and sing the whole of the day ;
 I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of
 power ;
 But at night I would roam abroad and
 play
 With the mermaids in and out of the rocks,
 Dressing their hair with the white sea-
 flower ;
 And holding them back by their flowing
 locks
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
 Laughingly, laughingly ;
 And then we would wander away, away
 To the pale-green sea-groves straight and
 high,
 Chasing each other merrily.

III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;
 But the wave would make music above
 us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic
 night—

Neither moon nor star.
 We would calf aloud in the dreamy dells,
 Call to each other and whoop and cry
 All night, merrily, merrily ;
 They would pelt me with starry spangles
 and shells,
 Laughing and clapping their hands be-
 tween,
 All night, merrily, merrily :
 But I would throw to them back in mine
 Turkis and agate and almandine :
 Then leaping out upon them unseen
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
 Laughingly, laughingly.
 Oh ! what a happy life were mine
 Under the hollow-hung ocean green !
 Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;
 We would live merrily, merrily.

THE MERMAID.

I.

WHO would be
 A mermaid fair,
 Singing alone,
 Combing her hair
 Under the sea,
 In a golden curl
 With a comb of pearl,
 On a throne ?

II.

I would be a mermaid fair ;
 I would sing to myself the whole of the
 day ;
 With a comb of pearl I would comb my
 hair ;
 And still as I comb'd I would sing and
 say,
 ' Who is it loves me ? who loves not me ?'
 I would comb my hair till my tangles
 would fall
 Low adown, low adown,
 From under my starry sea-bud crown
 Low adown and around,
 And I should look like a fountain of gold

Springing alone
 With a shrill inner sound,
 Over the throne
 In the midst of the hall ;
 Till that great sea-snake under the sea
 From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
 Round the hall where I sate, and look
 in at the gate
 With his large calm eyes for the love of
 me.
 And all the mermen under the sea
 Would feel their immortality
 Die in their hearts for the love of me.

III.

But at night I would wander away, away,
 I would fling on each side my low-
 flowing locks,
 And lightly vault from the throne and play
 With the mermen in and out of the
 rocks ;
 We would run to and fro, and hide and
 seek,
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson
 shells,
 Whose silverspikes are nighest the sea.
 But if any came near I would call, and
 shriek,
 And adown the steep like a wave I would
 leap
 From the diamond-ledges that jut from
 the dells ;
 For I would not be kiss'd by all who
 would list,
 Of the bold merry mermen under the
 sea ;
 They would sue me, and woo me, and
 flatter me,
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;
 But the king of them all would carry me,
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,
 In the branching jaspers under the sea ;
 Then all the dry pied things that be
 In the hueless mosses under the sea
 Would curl round my silver feet silently,
 All looking up for the love of me.
 And if I should carol aloud, from aloft
 All things that are forked, and horned,
 and soft

Would lean out from the hollow sphere
 of the sea,
 All looking down for the love of me.

ADELINE.

I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,
 Faintly smiling Adeline,
 Scarce of earth nor all divine,
 Nor unhappy, nor at rest,
 But beyond expression fair
 With thy floating flaxen hair ;
 Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes
 Take the heart from out my breast.
 Wherefore those dim looks of thine,
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,
 Like a lily which the sun
 Looks thro' in his sad decline,
 And a rose-bush leans upon,
 Thou that faintly smilest still,
 As a Naiad in a well,
 Looking at the set of day,
 Or a phantom two hours old
 Of a maiden past away,
 Ere the placid lips be cold ?
 Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,
 Spiritual Adeline ?

III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine ?
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline ?
 For sure thou art not all alone.
 Do beating hearts of salient springs
 Keep measure with thine own ?
 Hast thou heard the butterflies
 What they say betwixt their wings ?
 Or in stillest evenings
 With what voice the violet woos
 To his heart the silver dews ?
 Or when little airs arise,
 How the merry bluebell rings
 To the mosses underneath ?
 Hast thou look'd upon the breath
 Of the lilies at sunrise ?

Wherefore that faint smile of thine,
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,
Some spirit of a crimson rose
In love with thee forgets to close
His curtains, wasting odorous sighs
All night long on darkness blind.
What aileth thee? whom waitest thou
With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,
And those dew-lit eyes of thine,
Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind
When thou gazest at the skies?
Doth the low-tongued Orient
Wander from the side of the morn,
Dripping with Sabæan spice
On thy pillow, lowly bent
With melodious airs lovelorn,
Breathing Light against thy face,
While his locks a-drooping twined
Round thy neck in subtle ring
Make a carcanet of rays,
And ye talk together still,
In the language wherewith Spring
Letters cowships on the hill?
Hence that look and smile of thine,
Spiritual Adeline.

MARGARET.

I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,
What lit your eyes with tearful power,
Like moonlight on a falling shower?
Who lent you, love, your mortal dower
Of pensive thought and aspect pale,
Your melancholy sweet and frail
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?
From the westward-winding flood,
From the evening-lighted wood,
From all things outward you have
won
A tearful grace, as tho' you stood
Between the rainbow and the sun.

The very smile before you speak,
That dimples your transparent cheek,
Encircles all the heart, and feedeth
The senses with a still delight
Of dainty sorrow without sound,
Like the tender amber lound,
Which the moon about her spreadeth,
Moving thro' a fleecy night.

II.

You love, remaining peacefully,
To hear the murmur of the strife,
But enter not the toil of life.
Your spirit is the calmed sea,
Laid by the tumult of the fight.
You are the evening star, alway
Remaining betwixt dark and bright.
Lull'd echoes of laborious day
Come to you, gleams of mellow light
Float by you on the verge of night

III.

What can it matter, Margaret,
What songs below the waning stars
The lion-heart, Plantagenet,
Sang looking thro' his prison bars?
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell
The last wild thought of Chatelet,
Just ere the falling axe did part
The burning brain from the true heart,
Even in her sight he loved so well?

IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made
And gave you on your natal day.
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,
Keeps real sorrow far away.
You move not in such solitudes,
You are not less divine,
But more human in your moods,
Than you twin-sister, Adeline.
Your hair is darker, and your eyes
Touch'd with a somewhat darker hue,
And less aërially blue,
But ever trembling thro' the dew
Of dainty-woeful sympathies.

V.

O sweet pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,

Come down, come down, and hear me
speak :

Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :

The sun is just about to set,
The arching limes are tall and shady,
And faint, rainy lights are seen,
Moving in the leavy beech.

Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,
Where all day long you sit between
Joy and woe, and whisper each.

Or only look across the lawn,
Look out below your bower-eaves,
Look down, and let your blue eyes dawn
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

ROSALIND.

I.

My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
My frolic falcon, with bright eyes,
Whose free delight, from any height of
rapid flight,
Stoops at all game that wing the skies,
My Rosalind, my Rosalind,
My bright-eyed, wild-eyed falcon, whither,
Careless both of wind and weather,
Whither fly ye, what game spy ye,
Up or down the streaming wind?

II.

The quick lark's closest-caroll'd strains,
The shadow rushing up the sea,
The lightning flash between the rains,
The sunlight driving down the lea,
The leaping stream, the very wind,
That will not stay, upon his way,
To stoop the cowslip to the plains,
Is not so clear and bold and free
As you, my falcon Rosalind.
You care not for another's pains,
Because you are the soul of joy,
Bright metal all without alloy.
Life shoots and glances thro' your veins,
And flashes off a thousand ways,
Thro' lips and eyes in subtle rays.
Your hawk-eyes are keen and bright,
Keen with triumph, watching still
To pierce me thro' with pointed light ;
But oftentimes they flash and glitter

Like sunshine on a dancing rill,
And your words are seeming-bitter,
Sharp and few, but seeming-bitter
From excess of swift delight.

III.

Come down, come home, my Rosalind,
My gay young hawk, my Rosalind :
Too long you keep the upper skies ;
Too long you roam and wheel at will ;
But we must hood your random eyes,
That care not whom they kill,
And your cheek, whose brilliant hue
Is so sparkling-fresh to view,
Some red heath-flower in the dew,
Touch'd with sunrise. We must bind
And keep you fast, my Rosalind,
Fast, fast, my wild-eyed Rosalind,
And clip your wings, and make you love :
When we have lured you from above,
And that delight of frolic flight, by day
or night,
From North to South,
We'll bind you fast in silken cords,
And kiss away the bitter words,
From off your rosy mouth.

ELEÄNORE.

I.

Thy dark eyes open'd not,
Nor first reveal'd themselves to English
air,
For there is nothing here,
Which, from the outward to the inward
brought,
Moulded thy baby thought.
Far off from human neighbourhood,
Thou wert born, on a summer morn,
A mile beneath the cedar-wood.
Thy bounteous forehead was not fann'd
With breezes from our oaken glades,
But thou wert nursed in some delicious
land
Of lavish lights, and floating shades :
And flattering thy childish thought
The oriental fairy brought,
At the moment of thy birth,

From old well-heads of haunted rills,
And the hearts of purple hills,
And shadow'd coves on a sunny
shore,
The choicest wealth of all the
earth,
Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
To deck thy cradle, Eleanore.

II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,
Thro' half-open lattices
Coming in the scented breeze,
Fed thee, a child, lying alone,
With whitest honey in fairy gar-
dens cull'd—
A glorious child, dreaming alone,
Insilk-soft folds, unyielding down,
With the hum of swarming bees
Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

III.

Who may minister to thee?
Summer herself should minister
To thee, with fruitage golden-rinded
On golden salvers, or it may be,
Youngest Autumn, in a bower
Grape-thick'd from the light, and
blinded
With many a deep-hued bell-like
flower
Of fragrant trailers, when the air
Sleepeth over all the heaven,
And the crag that fronts the Even,
All along the shadowing shore,
Crimsons over an inland meire,
Eleanore!

IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,
How may measured words adore
The full-flowing harmony
Of thy swan-like stateliness,
Eleanore?
The luxuriant symmetry
Of thy floating gracefulness,
Eleanore?
Every turn and glance of thine,
Every lineament divine,
Eleanore,

And the steady sunset glow,
That stays upon thee? For in thee
Is nothing sudden, nothing single;
Like two streams of incense free
From one censer in one shrine,
Thought and motion mingle,
Mingle ever. Motions flow
To one another, even as tho'
They were modulated so
To an unheard melody,
Which lives about thee, and a sweep
Of richest pauses, evermore
Drawn from each other mellow-deep;
Who may express thee, Eleanore?

V.

I stand before thee, Eleanore;
I see thy beauty gradually unfold,
Daily and hourly, more and more.
I muse, as in a trance, the while
Slowly, as from a cloud of gold,
Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.
I muse, as in a trance, when'er
The languors of thy love-deep eyes
Float on to me. I would I were
So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
To stand apart, and to adore,
Gazing on thee for evermore,
Serene, imperial Eleanore!

VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity
Gazing, I seem to see
Thought folded over thought, smiling
asleep,
Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep
In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd quite,
I cannot veil, or droop my sight,
But am as nothing in its light:
As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,
Ev'n while we gaze on it,
Should slowly round his orb, and slowly
grow
To a full face, there like a sun remain
Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,
And draw itself to what it was
before;
So full, so deep, so slow,
Thought seems to come and go
In thy large eyes, imperial Eleanore.

VII.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,
 Roof'd the world with doubt and fear,
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,
 Grow golden all about the sky ;
 In thee all passion becomes passionless,
 Touch'd by thy spilt's mellowness,
 Losing his fire and active might
 In a silent meditation,
 Falling into a still delight,
 And luxury of contemplation .
 As waves that up a quiet cove
 Rolling slide, and lying still
 Shadow forth the banks at will :
 Or sometimes they swell and move,
 Pressing up against the land,
 With motions of the outer sea .
 And the self-same influence
 Controlleth all the soul and sense
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.
 His bow-string slacken'd, languid Love,
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,
 And so would languish evermore,
 Serene, imperial Eleanore.

VIII.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses
 unconfined,
 While the amorous, odorous wind
 Breathes low between the sunset and
 the moon ;
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,
 On silken cushions half reclined ;
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps,
 While I muse upon thy face ;
 And a languid fire creeps
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon
 From thy rose-red lips MY name
 Floweth ; and then, as in a swoon,
 With dinning sound my ears are rife,
 My tremulous tongue faltereth,
 I lose my colour, I lose my breath,
 I drink the cup of a costly death,
 Brimm'd with delinious draughts of warm-
 est life.

I die with my delight, before
 I hear what I would hear from
 thee ;

Yet tell my name again to me,
 I *would* be dying evermore,
 So dying ever, Eleanore.

I.

My life is full of weary days,
 But good things have not kept aloof,
 Nor wander'd into other ways :
 I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,
 Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink
 Of that deep grave to which I go :
 Shake hands once more : I cannot sink
 So far—far down, but I shall know
 Thy voice, and answer from below.

II.

When in the darkness over me
 The four-handed mole shall scape,
 Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,
 Nor wreath thy cap with doleful crape,
 But pledge me in the flowing grape.

And when the sappy field and wood
 Grow green beneath the showery gray,
 And rugged barks begin to bud,
 And thio' damp holts new-flush'd with
 may,
 Ring sudden scritchings of the jay,

Then let wise Nature work her will,
 And on my clay her darnel grow ;
 Come only, when the days are still,
 And at my headstone whisper low,
 And tell me if the woodbines blow.

EARLY SONNETS.

I.

TO —.

As when with downcast eyes we muse and
 brood,
 And ebb into a former life, or seem
 To lapse far back in some confused dream

To states of mystical similitude ;
 If one but speaks or hems or stirs his chair,
 Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,
 So that we say, 'All this hath been before,
 All this hath been, I know not when or
 where.'
 So, friend, when first I look'd upon your
 face,
 Our thought gave answer each to each, so
 true—
 Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—
 That tho' I knew not in what time or place,
 Methought that I had often met with you,
 And either lived in either's heart and
 speech.

II.

TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou
 wilt be
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest
 To scare church-harpies from the master's
 feast ;
 Our dusted velvets have much need of
 these :
 Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old saws,
 Distill'd from some worm - canker'd
 homily ;
 But spurr'd at heart with fieriest energy
 To embattal and to wall about thy cause
 With iron-worded proof, hating to hark
 The humming of the drowsy pulpit-drone
 Half God's good sabbath, while the worn-
 out clerk
 Bow-beats his desk below. Thou from
 a throne
 Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the
 dark
 Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and
 mark.

III.

MINE be the strength of spirit, full and
 free,
 Like some broad river rushing down
 alone,
 With the selfsame impulse wherewith he
 was thrown
 From his loud fount upon the echoing
 lea :—

Which with increasing might doth forward
 flee
 By town, and tower, and hill, and cape,
 and isle,
 And in the middle of the green salt sea
 Keeps his blue waters fresh for many a mile.
 Mine be the power which ever to its sway
 Will win the wise at once, and by degrees
 May into uncongenial spirits flow ;
 Ev'n as the warm gulf-stream of Florida
 Floats far away into the Northern seas
 The lavish growths of southern Mexico.

IV.

ALEXANDER.

WARRIOR of God, whose strong right
 arm debased
 The throne of Persia, when her Satrap
 bled
 At Issus by the Syrian gates, or fled
 Beyond the Memmian naphtha-pits, dis-
 graced
 For ever—thee (thy pathway sand-erased)
 Gliding with equal crowns two serpents
 led
 Joyful to that palm-planted fountain-fed
 Ammonian Oasis in the waste.
 There in a silent shade of laurel brown
 Apart the Chaman Oracle divine
 Shelter'd his unapproached mysteries :
 High things were spoken there, unhandled
 down ;
 Only they saw thee from the secret shrine
 Returning with hot cheek and kindled
 eyes.

V.

BUONAPARTE.

HE thought to quell the stubborn hearts
 of oak,
 Madman!—to chain with chains, and bind
 with bands
 That island queen who sways the floods
 and lands
 From Ind to Ind, but in fair daylight woke,
 When from her wooden walls,—lit by
 sure hands,—
 With thunders, and with lightnings, and
 with smoke,—

Peal after peal, the British battle broke,
Lulling the brine against the Coptic sands
We taught him lowlier moods, when El-
sinore

Heard the war moan along the distant sea,
Rocking with shatter'd spars, with sudden
fires

Flamed over : at Trafalgar yet once more
We taught him : late he learned humility
Perforce, like those whom Gideon school'd
with briers.

VI.

POLAND.

How long, O God, shall men be ridden
down,

And trampled under by the last and least
Of men ? The heart of Poland hath not
ceased

To quiver, tho' her sacred blood doth
drown

The fields, and out of every smouldering
town

Cries to Thee, lest brute Power be in-
creased,

Till that o'ergrown Barbarian in the East
Transgress his ample bound to some new
crown :—

Cries to Thee, 'Lord, how long shall
these things be ?

How long this icy-hearted Muscovite
Oppress the region ?' Us, O Just and
Good,

Forgive, who smiled when she was torn
in three ;

Us, who stand now, when we should aid
the right—

A matter to be wept with tears of blood !

VII.

CARESS'D or chidden by the slender hand,
And singing airy trifles this or that,
Light Hope at Beauty's call would perch
and stand,

And run thro' every change of sharp and
flat ;

And Fancy came and at her pillow sat,
When Sleep had bound her in his rosy
band,

And chased away the still-recurring gnat,
And woke her with a lay from fairy land.
But now they live with Beauty less and
less,

For Hope is other Hope and wanders far,
Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious creeds ;
And Fancy watches in the wilderness,
Poor Fancy sadder than a single star,
That sets at twilight in a land of reeds.

VIII.

THE form, the form alone is eloquent !
A nobler yearning never broke her rest
Than but to dance and sing, be gaily
drest,

And win all eyes with all accomplish-
ment :

Yet in the whirling dances as we went,
My fancy made me for a moment blest
To find my heart so near the beauteous
breast

That once had power to rob it of content.
A moment came the tenderness of tears,
The phantom of a wish that once could
move,

A ghost of passion that no smiles re-
store—

For ah ! the slight coquette, she cannot
love,

And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand
years,

She still would take the praise, and care
no more.

IX.

WAN Sculptor, weepst thou to take the
cast

Of those dead lineaments that near thee
lie ?

O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the
past,

In painting some dead friend from memory ?
Weep on : beyond his object Love can
last :

His object lives : more cause to weep
have I :

My tears, no tears of love, are flowing fast,
No tears of love, but tears that Love can
die.

I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,

Nor care to sit beside her where she sits—
 Ah pity—hint it not in human tones,
 But breathe it into earth and close it up
 With secret death for ever, in the pits
 Which some green Christmas crams with
 weary bones.

X.

IF I were loved, as I desire to be,
 What is there in the great sphere of the
 earth,
 And range of evil between death and birth,
 That I should fear,—if I were loved by
 thee?
 All the inner, all the outer world of pain
 Clear Love would pierce and cleave, if
 thou wert mine,
 As I have heard that, somewhere in the
 main,
 Fresh-water springs come up through
 bitter brine.
 'Twere joy, not fear, claspt hand-in-hand
 with thee,
 To wait for death—mute—careless of all
 ills,
 Apart upon a mountain, tho' the surge
 Of some new deluge from a thousand hills
 Flung leagues of roaring foam into the
 gorge
 Below us, as far on as eye could see.

XI.

THE BRIDESMAID.

O BRIDESMAID, ere the happy knot was
 tied,
 Thine eyes so wept that they could hardly
 see;
 Thy sister smiled and said, 'No tears for
 me!
 A happy bridesmaid makes a happy bride.'
 And then, the couple standing side by
 side,
 Love lighted down between them full of
 glee,
 And over his left shoulder laugh'd at
 thee,
 'O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
 bride.'
 And all at once a pleasant truth I learn'd,
 For while the tender service made thee
 weep,
 I loved thee for the tear thou couldst not
 hude,
 And prest thy hand, and knew the press
 return'd,
 And thought, 'My life is sick of single
 sleep:
 O happy bridesmaid, make a happy
 bride!'

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

AND OTHER POEMS.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

ON either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd

By slow horses ; and unhail'd
 The shallop flutteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot :
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
 Or at the casement seen her stand ?
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot :
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott.'

PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colours gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
 That hangs before her all the year,
 Shadows of the world appear.
 There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot :
 There the river eddy whirls,
 And there the surly village-churls,
 And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
 An abbot on an ambling pad,
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
 The knights come riding two and two :
 She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
 To weave the mirror's magic sights,

For often thro' the silent nights
 A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot :
 Or when the moon was overhead,
 Came two young lovers lately wed ;
 'I am half sick of shadows,' said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-eaves,
 He rode between the barley-sheaves,
 The sun came dazling thro' the leaves,
 And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.
 A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
 To a lady in his shield,
 That sparkled on the yellow field,
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
 Like to some banch of stars we see
 Hung in the golden Galaxy.
 The bndle bells rang merrily
 As he rode down to Camelot :
 And from his blazon'd baldric slung
 A mighty silver bugle hung,
 And as he rode his armour rung,
 Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
 The helmet and the helmet-feather
 Burn'd like one burning flame together,
 As he rode down to Camelot.
 As often thro' the purple night,
 Below the starry clusters bright,
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
 From underneath his helmet flow'd
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,
 As he rode down to Camelot.
 From the bank and from the river
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
 'Tirra lirra,' by the river
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
 She made three paces thro' the room,

She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complain-
ing,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Dad she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loos'd the chain, and down she lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot :
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer ;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot :
But Lancelot mused a little space ;
He said, 'She has a lovely face ;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott.'

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,
The house thro' all the level shines,
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
And silent in its dusty vines :
A faint-blue ridge upon the right,
An empty river-bed before,
And shallows on a distant shore,
In glaring sand and inlets bright.
But 'Ave Mary,' made she moan,
And 'Ave Mary,' night and morn,
And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

She, as her carol sadder grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her steaming curls of deepest brown
To left and right, and made appear
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,
Her melancholy eyes divine,
The home of woe without a tear.
And 'Ave Mary,' was her moan,
'Madonna, sad is night and morn,'
And 'Ah,' she sang, 'to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

Till all the crimson changed, and past
Into deep orange o'er the sea,

Low on her knees herself she cast,
 Before Our Lady murmur'd she ;
 Complaining, 'Mother, give me grace
 To help me of my weary load.'
 And on the liquid murmur glow'd
 The clear perfection of her face.

'Is this the form,' she made her
 moan,

'That won his praises night and
 morn ;'

And 'Ah,' she said, 'but I wake
 alone,

I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn.'

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would bleat,
 Nor any cloud would cross the vault,
 But day increased from heat to heat,
 On stony drought and steaming salt ;
 Till now at noon she slept again,

And seem'd knee-deep in mountain
 grass,

And heard her native breezes pass,
 And runlets babbling down the glen.

She breathed in sleep a lower moan,
 And murmuring, as at night and
 morn,

She thought, 'My spirit is here alone,
 Walks forgotten, and is forlorn.'

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream :

She felt he was and was not there.

She woke : the babble of the stream

Fell, and, without, the steady glare
 Shrank one sick willow sear and small.

The river-bed was dusty-white ;

And all the furnace of the light

Struck up against the blinding wall.

She whisper'd, with a stifled moan

More inward than at night or morn,

'Sweet Mother, let me not here alone

Live forgotten and die forlorn.'

And, rising, from her bosom drew

Old letters, breathing of her worth,

For 'Love,' they said, 'must needs be
 true,

To what is loveliest upon earth.'

An image seem'd to pass the door,

To look at her with slight, and say

'But now thy beauty flows away,

So be alone for evermore.'

'O cruel heart,' she changed her tone,
 'And cruel love, whose end is scorn,
 Is this the end to be left alone,
 To live forgotten, and die forlorn?'

But sometimes in the falling day

An image seem'd to pass the door,
 To look into her eyes and say,

'But thou shalt be alone no more.'

And flaming downward over all

From heat to heat the day decreased,

And slowly rounded to the east

The one black shadow from the wall.

'The day to night,' she made her
 moan,

'The day to night, the night to
 morn,

And day and night I am left alone
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

At eve a dry cicala sung,

There came a sound as of the sea ;

Backward the lattice-blind she flung,

And lean'd upon the balcony.

There all in spaces rosy-bright

Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,

And deepening thro' the silent spheres

Heaven over Heaven rose the night.

And weeping then she made her moan,

'The night comes on that knows not
 morn,

When I shall cease to be all alone,

To live forgotten, and love forlorn.'

THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,

'Thou art so full of misery,
 Were it not better not to be?'

Then to the still small voice I said ;

'Let me not cast in endless shade
 What is so wonderfully made.'

To which the voice did urge reply ;

'To-day I saw the dragon-fly

• Come from the wells where he did lie.

'An inner impulse rent the veil

Of his old husk : from head to tail

Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

'He drier his wings : like gauze they grew ;
Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew
A living flash of light he flew.'

I said, 'When first the world began,
Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,
And in the sixth she moulded man.

'She gave him mind, the lordliest
Proportion, and, above the rest,
Dominion in the head and breast.'

Thereto the silent voice replied ;
'Self-blinded are you by your pride :
Look up thro' night : the world is wide.

'This truth within thy mind rehearse,
That in a boundless universe
Is boundless better, boundless worse.

'Think you this mould of hopes and fears
Could find no statelier than his peers
In yonder hundred million spheres?'

It spake, moreover, in my mind :
'Tho' thou wert scatter'd to the wind,
Yet is there plenty of the kind.'

Then did my response clearer fall :
'No compound of this earthly ball
Is like another, all in all.'

To which he answer'd scoffingly ;
'Good soul ! suppose I grant it thee,
Who'll weep for thy deficiency?'

'Or will one beam be less intense,
When thy peculiar difference
Is cancell'd in the world of sense?'

I would have said, 'Thou canst not know,'
But my full heart, that work'd below,
Ran'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me :
'Thou art so steep'd in misery,
Surely 'twere better not to be.

'Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,
Nor any train of reason keep :
Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep.'

I said, 'The years with change advance :
If I make dark my countenance,
I shut my life from happier chance.

'Some turn this sickness yet might take,
Ev'n yet ' But he : 'What drug can make
A wither'd palsy cease to shake?'

I wept, 'Tho' I should die, I know
That all about the thorn will blow
In tufts of rosy-tinted snow ;

'And men, thro' novel spheres of thought
Still moving after truth long sought,
Will learn new things when I am not.'

'Yet,' said the secret voice, 'some time,
Sooner or later, will gray prime
Make thy grass hoar with early rime.

'Not less swift souls that yearn for light,
Rapt after heaven's starry flight,
Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

'Not less the bee would range her cells,
The fuzzy prickle fire the dells,
The foxglove cluster dappled bells.'

I said that 'all the years invent ;
Each month is various to present
The world with some development.

'Were this not well, to bide mine hour,
Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower
How grows the day of human power?'

'The highest-mounted mind,' he said,
'Still sees the sacred morning spread
The silent summit overhead.

'Will thirty seasons render plain
Those lonely lights that still remain,
Just breaking over land and main?'

'Or make that morn, from his cold crown
And crystal silence creeping down,
Flood with full daylight glebe and town?'

'Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let
Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set
In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

'Thou hast not gain'd a real height,
Nor art thou nearer to the light,
Because the scale is infinite.

'Twere better not to breathe or speak,
Than cry for strength, remaining weak,
And seem to find, but still to seek.

'Moreover, but to seem to find
Asks what thou lackest, thought resign'd,
A healthy frame, a quiet mind.'

I said, 'When I am gone away,
'He dread not tarry,' men will say,
Doing dishonour to my clay.'

'This is more vile,' he made reply,
'To breathe and loathe, to live and sigh,
Than once from dread of pain to die.

'Sick art thou—a divided will
Still heaping on the fear of ill
The fear of men, a coward still.

'Do men love thee? Art thou so bound
To men, that how thy name may sound
Will vex thee lying underground?

'The memory of the wither'd leaf
In endless time is scarce more brief
Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.

'Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;
The right ear, that is fill'd with dust,
Hears little of the false or just.'

'Hard task, to pluck resolve,' I cried,
'From emptiness and the waste wide
Of that abyss, or scornful pride!

'Nay—rather yet that I could raise
One hope that warm'd me in the days
While still I yearn'd for human praise.

'When, wide in soul and bold of tongue,
Among the tents I paused and sung,
The distant battle flash'd and rung.

'I sung the joyful Pæan clear,
And, sitting, burnish'd without fear
The brand, the buckler, and the spear—

'Waiting to strive a happy strife,
To war with falsehood to the knife,
And not to lose the good of life—

'Some hidden principle to move,
To put together, part and prove,
And mete the bounds of hate and love—

'As far as might be, to carve out
Free space for every human doubt,
That the whole mind might orb about—

'To search thro' all I felt or saw,
The springs of life, the depths of awe,
And reach the law within the law:

'At least, not rotting like a weed,
But, having sown some generous seed,
Fruitful of further thought and deed,

'To pass, when Life her light withdraws,
Not void of righteous self-applause,
Nor in a merely selfish cause—

'In some good cause, not in mine own,
To perish, wept for, honour'd, known,
And like a warrior overthrown;

'Whose eyes are dim with glorious tears,
When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears
His country's war-song thrill his ears:

'Then dying of a mortal stroke,
What time the foeman's line is broke,
And all the war is roll'd in smoke.'

'Yea!' said the voice, 'thy dream was good,
While thou abodest in the bud.
It was the stirring of the blood.

'If Nature put not forth her power
About the opening of the flower,
Who is it that could live an hour?

'Then comes the check, the change, the
fall,
Pain rises up, old pleasures fall.
There is one remedy for all.

'Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,
Link'd month to month with such a chain
Of knitted purport, all were vain.

Thou hadst not between death and
birth

Dissolved the riddle of the earth.
So weie thy labour little-worth

'That men with knowledge merely play'd,
I told thee—hardly nigher made,
Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade ;

'Much less this dreamer, deaf and blind,
Named man, may hope some truth to find,
That bears relation to the mind.

'For every worm beneath the moon
Draws different threads, and late and soon
Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

'Cry, faint not : either Truth is born
Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,
Or in the gateways of the morn.

'Cry, faint not, climb: the summits slope
Beyond the furthest flights of hope,
Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.

'Sometimes a little corner shines,
As over rainy mist inclines
A gleaming crag with belts of pines.

'I will go forward, sayest thou,
I shall not fail to find her now.
Look up, the fold is on her brow.

'If straight thy track, or if oblique,
Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost
strike,
Embracing cloud, Ixion-like ;

'And owning but a little more
Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,
Calling thyself a little lower

'Than angels. Cease to wail and bawl!
Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?
There is one remedy for all.'

'O dull, one-sided voice,' said I,
'Wilt thou make everything a lie,
To flatter me that I may die?

'I know that age to age succeeds,
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
A dust of systems and of creeds.

'I cannot hide that some have striven,
Achieving calm, to whom was given
The joy that mixes man with Heaven :

'Who, rowing hard against the stream,
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,
And did not dream it was a dream ;

'But heard, by secret transport led,
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,
The murmur of the fountain-head—

'Which did accomplish their desire,
Bore and forbore, and did not tie,
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

'He heeded not reviling tones,
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised
with stones :

'But looking upward, full of grace,
He pray'd, and from a happy place
God's glory smote him on the face.'

The sullen answer slid betwixt :
'Not that the grounds of hope were
fix'd,
The elements were kindlier mix'd.'

I said, 'I toil beneath the curse,
But, knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

'And that, in seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
I knnt a hundred others new :

'Or that this anguish fleeting hence,
Unmanacled from bonds of sense,
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence :

'For I go, weak from suffering here :
Naked I go, and void of cheer :
What is it that I may not fear ?

'Consider well,' the voice replied,
'His face, that two hours since hath died ;
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride ?

'Will he obey when one commands?
Or answer should one press his hands?
He answers not, nor understands.

'His palms are folded on his breast :
There is no other thing express'd
But long disquiet merged in rest.

'His lips are very mild and meek :
Tho' one should smite him on the cheek,
And on the mouth, he will not speak.

'His little daughter, whose sweet face
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,
Becomes dishonour to her race—

'His sons grow up that bear his name,
Some grow to honour, some to shame,—
But he is chill to praise or blame.

'He will not hear the north-wind rave,
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave
From winter rains that beat his grave.

'High up the vapours fold and swim :
About him broods the twilight dim :
'The place he knew forgetteth him.'

'If all be dark, vague voice,' I said,
'These things are wrapt in doubt and
dread,
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

'The sap dries up : the plant declines.
A deeper tale my heart divines.
Know I not Death ? the outward signs ?

'I found him when my years were few ;
A shadow on the graves I knew,
And darkness in the village yew.

'From grave to grave the shadow crept :
In her still place the morning wept :
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

'The simple senses crown'd his head .
"Omega ! thou art Lord," they said,
"We find no motion in the dead."

'Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,
Should that plain fact, as taught by these,
Not make him sure that he shall cease ?

'Who forged that other influence,
That heat of inward evidence,
By which he doubts against the sense ?

'He owns the fatal gift of eyes,
That read his spirit blindly wise,
Not simple as a thing that dies.

'Here sits he shaping wings to fly :
His heart forebodes a mystery :
He names the name Eternity.

'That type of Perfect in his mind
In Nature can he nowhere find.
He sows himself on every wind.

'He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,
And tho' thick veils to apprehend
A labour working to an end.

'The end and the beginning vex
His reason : many things perplex,
With motions, checks, and counterchecks.

'He knows a baseness in his blood
At such strange war with something
good,
He may not do the thing he would.

'Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
Vast images in glimmering dawn;
Half shown, are broken and withdrawn

'Ah ! sure within him and without,
Could his dark wisdom find it out,
There must be answer to his doubt,

'But thou canst answer not again
With thine own weapon art thou slain,
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

'The doubt would rest, I dare not solve.
In the same circle we revolve.
Assurance only breeds resolve.'

As when a billow, blown against,
Falls back, the voice with which I fenced
A little ceased, but recommenced.

'Where wert thou when thy father play'd
In his free field, and pastime made,
A merry boy in sun and shade ?

'A merry boy they call'd him then,
He sat upon the knees of men
In days that never come again.

'Before the little ducts began
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran
Their course, till thou wert also man :

'Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,
Whose troubles number with his days :

'A life of nothings, nothing-worth,
From that first nothing ere his birth
To that last nothing under earth !'

'These words,' I said, 'are like the rest ;
No certain clearness, but at best
A vague suspicion of the breast :

'But if I grant, thou mightst defend
The thesis which thy words intend—
That to begin implies to end ;

'Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould ?

'I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain.

'It may be that no life is found,
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

'As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

'As here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

'So might we, if our state were such
As one before, remember much,
For those two likes might meet and touch.

'But, if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

'Some vague emotion of delight
In gazing up an Alpine height,
Some yearning toward the lamps of
night ;

'Or if thro' lower lives I came—
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame—

'I might forget my weaker lot ;
For is not our first year forgot ?
The haunts of memory echo not.

'And men, whose reason long was blind,
From cells of madness unconfined,
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

'Much more, if first I floated free,
As naked essence, must I be
Incompetent of memory :

'For memory dealing but with time,
And he with matter, could she climb
Beyond her own material prime ?

'Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

'Of something felt, like something here ;
Of something done, I know not where ;
Such as no language may declare.'

The still voice laugh'd. 'I talk,' said he,
'Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee
Thy pain is a reality.'

'But thou,' said I, 'hast missed thy
mark,
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,
By making all the horizon dark.

'Why not set forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might ensue
With this old soul in organs new ?

'Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly long'd for death.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant ;
More life, and fuller, that I want.'

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,
'Behold, it is the Sabbath morn.'

And I arose, and I released
The casement, and the light increased
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,
When meres begin to uncongeal,
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :
Passing the place where each must rest,
Each enter'd like a welcome guest.

One walk'd between his wife and child,
With measured footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walk'd demure,
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :
I spoke, but answer came there none ;
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper silver-clear,
A murmur, 'Be of better cheer.'

As from some blissful neighbourhood,
A notice faintly understood,
'I see the end, and know the good.'

A little hint to solace woe,
A hint, a whisper breathing low,
'I may not speak of what I know.'

Like an Æolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtakes
Far thought with music that it makes :

Such seem'd the whisper at my side :
'What is it thou knowest, sweet voice ?'
I cried.

'A hidden hope,' the voice replied :

So heavenly-toned, that in that hour
From out my sullen heart a power
Broke, like the rainbow from the shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,
And Nature's living motion lent
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,
The slow result of winter showers :
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along :
The woods were fill'd so full with song,
There seem'd no room for sense of wrong ;

And all so variously wrought,
I marvel'd how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought ;

And wherefore rather I made choice
To commune with that barren voice,
Than him that said, 'Rejoice ! Rejoice !'

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,
His double chin, his portly size,
And who that knew him could forget
The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?
The slow wise smile that, round about
His dusty forehead duly curl'd,
Seem'd half-within and half-without,
And full of dealings with the world ?

In yonder chair I see him sit,
Three fingers round the old silver cup—
I see his gray eyes twinkle yet
At his own jest—gray eyes lit up
With summer lightnings of a soul
So full of summer warmth, so glad,
So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,
His memory scarce can make me sad.

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :
My own sweet Alice, we must die.
There's somewhat in this world amiss
Shall be unriddled by and by.

There's somewhat flows to us in life,
 But more is taken quite away.
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
 That we may die the self-same day.

Have I not found a happy earth?
 I least should breathe a thought of
 pain.

Would God renew me from my birth
 I'd almost live my life again.
 So sweet it seems with thee to walk,
 And once again to woo thee mine—
 It seems in after-dinner talk
 Across the walnuts and the wine—

To be the long and listless boy
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,
 Where this old mansion mounted high
 Looks down upon the village spire:
 For even here, where I and you
 Have lived and loved alone so long,
 Each morn my sleep was broken thro'
 By some wild skylark's matin song.

And oft I heard the tender dove
 In firry woodlands making moan;
 But ere I saw your eyes, my love,
 I had no motion of my own.
 For scarce my life with fancy play'd
 Before I dream'd that pleasant dream—
 Still hither thither idly sway'd
 Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear
 The milldam rushing down with noise,
 And see the minnows everywhere
 In crystal eddies glance and poise,
 The tall flag-flowers when they sprung
 Below the range of stepping-stones,
 Or those three chestnuts near, that hung
 In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,
 When after roving in the woods
 ('Twas April then), I came and sat
 Below the chestnuts, when their buds
 Were glistening to the breezy blue;
 And on the slope, an absent fool,
 I cast me down, nor thought of you,
 But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,
 An echo from a measured strain,
 Beat time to nothing in my head
 From some odd corner of the brain.
 It haunted me, the morning long,
 With weary sameness in the rhymes,
 The phantom of a silent song,
 That went and came a thousand times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood
 I watch'd the little circles die;
 They past into the level flood,
 And there a vision caught my eye;
 The reflex of a beauteous form,
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,
 As when a sunbeam wavers warm
 Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,
 That morning, on the casement-edge
 A long green box of mignonette,
 And you were leaning from the ledge:
 And when I raised my eyes, above
 They met with two so full and bright—
 Such eyes! I swear to you, my love,
 That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear
 That I should die an early death:
 For love possess'd the atmosphere,
 And fill'd the breast with pure breath.
 My mother thought, What ails the boy?
 For I was alter'd, and began
 To move about the house with joy,
 And with the certain step of man.

I loved the humming wave that swam
 Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,
 The sleepy pool above the dam,
 The pool beneath it never still,
 The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,
 The dark round of the dripping
 wheel,
 The very air about the door
 Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,
 When April nights began to blow,
 And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
 I saw the village lights below;

I knew your taper far away,
And full at heart of trembling hope,
From of the wold I came, and lay
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill ;
And 'by that lamp,' I thought, 'she sits !'
The white chalk-quarry from the hill
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.

'O that I were beside her now !
O will she answer if I call ?
O would she give me vow for vow,
Sweet Alice, if I told her all ?'

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin ;
And, in the pauses of the wind,
Sometimes I heard you sing within ;
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,
And the long shadow of the chain
Flitted across into the night,
And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,
The lanes, you know, were white with
 may,
Your ripe lips moved not, but your cheek
Flush'd like the coming of the day ;
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy,
You would, and would not, little one !
Although I pleaded tenderly,
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought
To yield consent to my desire :
She wish'd me happy, but she thought
I might have look'd a little higher ;
And I was young—too young to wed .
'Yet must I love her for your sake ;
Go fetch your Alice here,' she said :
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride :
But, Alice, you were ill at ease ;
This dress and that by turns you tried,
Too fearful that you should not please.
I loved you better for your fears,
I knew you could not look but well ;
And dews, that would have fall'n in tears,
I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the little flutterings,
The doubt my mother would not see ;
She spoke at large of many things,
And at the last she spoke of me ;
And tuning look'd upon your face,
As near this door you sat apart,
And rose, and, with a silent grace
Approaching, press'd you heart to heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song
I gave you, Alice, on the day
When, arm in arm, we went along,
A pensive pair, and you were gay
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,
As in the nights of old, to lie
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,
While those full chestnuts whisper by.

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I must be the jewel
That trembles in her ear .
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet ! which true love spells—
True love interprets—right alone.
His light upon the letter dwells,
For all the spirit is his own.
So, if I waste words now, in truth
You must blame Love. His early rage
Had force to make me rhyme in youth,
And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,
Like mine own life to me thou art,
Where Past and Present, wound in one,
Do make a garland for the heart :

So sing that other song I made,
 Half-angel'd with my happy lot,
 The day, when in the chestnut shade
 I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that hath us in the net,
 Can he pass, and we forget?
 Many suns arise and set.
 Many a chance the years beget
 Love the gift is Love the debt

Even so
 Love is hurt with jar and fret.
 Love is made a vague regret
 Eyes with idle tears are wet.
 Idle habit links us yet.
 What is love? for we forget :
 Ah, no ! no !

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True
 wife,

Round my true heart thine arms entwined
 My other dearer life in life,
 Look thro' my very soul with thine !
 Untouch'd with any shade of years,
 May those kind eyes for ever dwell !
 They have not shed a many tears,
 Dear eyes, since first I knew them
 well.

Yet tears they shed : they had their part
 Of sorrow : for when time was ripe,
 The still affection of the heart
 Became an outward breathing type,
 That into stillness past again,
 And left a want unknown before ;
 Although the loss had brought us pain,
 That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on The kiss,
 The woven arms, seem but to be
 Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
 The comfort, I have found in thee :
 But that God bless thee, dear—who
 wrought

Two spirits to one equal mind—
 With blessings beyond hope or thought,
 With blessings which no words can find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,
 To yon old mill across the wolds ;
 For look, the sunset, south and north,
 Winds all the vale in rosy folds,

And fies your narrow casement glass,
 Touching the sullen pool below :
 On the chalk-hill the bearded grass
 Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

FATIMA.

O LOVE, Love, Love ! O withering might !
 O sun, that from thy noonday height
 Shudderest when I strain my sight,
 Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,
 Lo, falling from my constant mind,
 Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and blind,
 I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours
 Below the city's eastern towers :
 I thirsted for the brooks, the showers :
 I roll'd among the tender flowers :
 I crush'd them on my breast, my mouth ;
 I look'd athwart the burning drouth
 Of that long desert to the south.

Last night, when some one spoke his
 name,
 From my swift blood that went and came
 A thousand little shafts of flame
 Were shiver'd in my narrow frame.
 O Love, O fire ! once he drew
 With one long kiss my whole soul thro'
 My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know
 He cometh quickly : from below
 Sweet gales, as from deep gardens, blow
 Before him, striking on my brow.
 In my dry brain my spirit soon,
 Down-deepening from swoon to swoon,
 Faints like a dazzled morning moon.

The wind sounds like a silver wire,
 And from beyond the noon a fire
 Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher
 The skies stoop down in their desire ;
 And, isled in sudden seas of light,
 My heart, pierced thro' with fierce
 delight,
 Bursts into blossom in his sight.

My whole soul waiting silently,
 All naked in a sultry sky,

Droops blinded with his shining eye :
I *will* possess him or will die.

I will grow round him in his place,
Grow, live, die looking on his face,
Die, dying clasp'd in his embrace.

CENONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the
glen,

Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine
to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either
hand

The lawns and meadow-ledges midway
down

Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
roals

The long brook falling thro' the clov'n
ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning : but in
front

The goiges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
Mournful Cenone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round
her neck

Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with
vine,

Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-
shade

Sloped downward to her seat from the
upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill :
The grasshopper is silent in the grass :
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are
dead.

The purple flower droops : the golden bee

Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.

My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are
dim,

And I am all aware of my life.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O
Caves

That house the cold crown'd snake ! O
mountain brooks,

I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gather'd shape : for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine :
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,
white-hooved,

Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft :
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-
dropt eyes

I sat alone : white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard
skin

Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny
hair

Cluster'd about his temples like a God's :
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow
brightens

When the wind blows the foam, and all
my heart

Went forth to embrace him coming ere
he came.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-
white palm

Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of
speech

Came down upon my heart.

"My own Cenone,
Beautiful-brow'd Cenone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind
ingrav'n

'For the most fair,' would seem to award
it thine,

As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married
brows."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added "This was cast upon the
board,

When all the full-faced presence of the
Gods

Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom
'twere due:

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the
cave

Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of
Gods."

'Dear mother Ida, haiken ere I die.
It was the deep midnoon: one silvery
cloud

Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower
they came,

Naked they came to that smooth-swarded
bower,

And at their feet the crocus brake like
fire,

Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and
vine,

This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro'
and thro'.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and
lean'd

Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her, to
whom

Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that
grows

Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue
Wherewith to embellish state, "from
many a vale

And river-sunder'd champaign clothed
with corn,

Or labour'd mine undrainable of ore.
Honour," she said, "and homage, tax
and toll,

From many an inland town and haven
large,

Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing
citadel

In glassy bays among her tallest towers."

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of
power,

"Which in all action is the end of all;
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom—from all neigh-
bour crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon
from me,

From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee
king-born,

A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men,
in power

Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
 Out at arm's-length, so much the thought
 of power
 Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she
 stood
 Somewhat apart, her clear and bared
 limbs
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed
 spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
 The while, above, her full and earnest
 eye
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry
 cheek
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made
 reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-
 control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign
 power.
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncalled for) but to live by
 law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear ;
 And, because right is right, to follow right
 Werewisdom in the scorn of consequence."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Again she said : "I woo thee not with
 gifts.
 Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,
 If gazing on divinity disrobed
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
 Unbias'd by self-profit, oh ! rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to
 thee,

So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a
 God's,

To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
 Snew'd with action, and the full-grown
 will,

Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom."

'Here she ceas'd,
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, "O
 Paris,
 Give it to Pallas !" but he heard me not,
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me !

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian
 wells,
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her
 deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 And shoulder : from the violets her light
 foot
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded
 form
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she
 moved.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, "I promise
 thee
 The fairest and most loving wife in
 Greece,"
 She spoke and laugh'd : I shut my sight
 for fear :
 But when I look'd, Paris had raised his
 arm,
 And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
 And I was left alone within the bower ;
 And from that time to this I am alone,
 And I shall be alone until I die.

'Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Fairest—why fairest wife ? am I not fair ?
 My love hath told me so a thousand
 times.

Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful
 tail

Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most
 loving is she ?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my
arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
prest
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling
dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest
pines,
My tall dark pines, that plumed the
craggy ledge
High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Foster’d the callow eaglet—from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the
dark morn
The panther’s roar came muffled, while
I sat
Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist
Sweep thro’ them ; never see them over-
laid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trem-
bling stars.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruin’d folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the
glens,
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with
her
The Abominable, that uninvited came
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change ; that I might speak
my mind,
And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and
men.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand
times,
In this green valley, under this green hill,
Ev’n on this hand, and sitting on this
stone?

Seal’d it with kisses? water’d it with
tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these !
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my
face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating
cloud,
There are enough unhappy on this earth,
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live :
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
Thou weightest heavy on the heart within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids : let me die.

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and
more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the in-
most hills,
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born : her child !—a shudder comes
Across me : never child be born of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father’s eyes !

‘O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to
me
Walking the cold and starless road of
Death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and
go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come
forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
What this may be I know not, but I
know
That, wheresoe’er I am by night and
day,
All earth and air seem only burning
fire.’

THE SISTERS.

WE were two daughters of one race :
She was the fairest in the face :

The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
They were together, and she fell ;
Therefore revenge became me well.
O the Earl was fair to see !

She died : she went to burning flame :
She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.
The wind is howling in turret and tree.
Whole weeks and months, and early and late,
To win his love I lay in wait :
O the Earl was fair to see !

I made a feast ; I bade him come ;
I won his love, I brought him home.
The wind is roaring in turret and tree.
And after supper, on a bed,
Upon my lap he laid his head :
O the Earl was fair to see !

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.
The wind is raging in turret and tree.
I hated him with the hate of hell,
But I loved his beauty passing well.
O the Earl was fair to see !

I rose up in the silent night :
I made my dagger sharp and bright.
The wind is raving in turret and tree.
As half-asleep his breath he drew,
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.
O the Earl was fair to see !

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,
He look'd so grand when he was dead.
The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
I wrapt his body in the sheet,
And laid him at his mother's feet.
O the Earl was fair to see !

TO —.

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,
(For you will understand it) of a soul,

A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,
A spacious garden full of flowering weeds,
A glorious Devil, large in heart and brain,
That did love Beauty only, (Beauty seen
In all varieties of mould and mind)
And Knowledge for its beauty ; or if
Good,
Good only for its beauty, seeing not
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge, are
three sisters
That doat upon each other, friends to
man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be under'd without tears.
And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall
be
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold
lie
Howling in outer darkness. Not for this
Was common clay ta'en from the common
earth
Moulded by God, and temper'd with the
tears
Of angels to the perfect shape of man

THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
I said, 'O Soul, make merry and carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well.'

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd
brass
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or
shelf
The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.

And 'while the world runs round and
round,' I said,
'Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast
shade
Sleeps on his luminous ring'

To which my soul made answer readily :
 ' Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
 In this great mansion, that is built for me,
 So loyal-rich and wide.'

* * * * *
 * * * * *

Four courts I made, East, West and
 South and North,
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there
 ran a row
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge to distant lands,
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the
 sky
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one
 swell
 Across the mountain stream'd below
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
 A cloud of incense of all odour steam'd
 From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, ' And who shall
 gaze upon
 My palace with unblinded eyes,
 While this great bow will waver in the sun,
 And that sweet incense rise ?'

For that sweet incense rose and never
 fail'd,
 And, while days sank or mounted higher,
 The light aerial gallery, golden-laid,
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd
 and traced,
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
 From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,
 And tipt with frost-like spues.

* * * * *
 * * * * *

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
 Thio' which the livelong day my soul
 did pass,
 Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace
 stood,
 All various, each a perfect whole
 From living Nature, fit for every mood
 And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green
 and blue,
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter
 blew
 His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of
 sand,
 And some one pacing there alone,
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry
 waves.
 You seem'd to hear them climb and fall
 And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing
 caves,
 Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
 By heids upon an endless plain,
 The ragged rims of thunder brooding
 low,
 With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
 In front they bound the sheaves. Behind
 Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
 And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with stones
 and slags,
 Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
 All barr'd with long white cloud the
 scornful crags,
 And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight pour'd

On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stein, was there
Not less than truth design'd.

* * * *

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise
A group of Houris bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian
king to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward borne:
From one hand droop'd a crocus: one
hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone: but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, design'd.

* * * *

Then in the towers I placed great bells
that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver sound;
And with choice paintings of wise men I
hung
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and
mild;
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd
his song,
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;
A million wrinkles carved his skin;
A hundred winters snow'd upon his breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and
stings;
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or
bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man
declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod . and those great
bells

Began to chime. She took her throne.
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' coloured
flame

Two godlike faces gazed below ;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion
were

Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd
fair
In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber,
emerald, blue,

Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,
drew
Rivers of melodies. -

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd
song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful
mirth,

Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible
earth,
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : ' All these are
mine,

And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me.' She—when young night
divine

Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands
and cried,

' I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich, and wide,
Be flatter'd to the height.

' O all things fair to sate my various eyes !
O shapes and hues that please me well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

' O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves
of swine
That range on yonder plain.

' In filthy sloughs they roll a purulent skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and
sleep ;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep.'

Then of the moral instinct would she prate
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate ;
And at the last she said -

' I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all.'

* * * * *

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn
mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd : so
three years

She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his
ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever he bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she
 turn'd her sight
 The airy hand confusion wrought,
 Wrote, 'Mene, mene,' and divided quite
 The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
 Fell on her, from which mood was
 born
 Scorn of herself; again, from out that
 mood
 Laughter at her self-scorn.

'What' is not this my place of strength,'
 she said,
 'My spacious mansion built for me,
 Whereof the strong foundation-stones
 were laid
 Since my first memory?'

But in dark corners of her palace stood
 Uncertain shapes; and unawares
 On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears
 of blood,
 And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of
 flame,
 And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
 On corpses three-months-old at noon she
 came,
 That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light
 Or power of movement, seem'd my
 soul,
 'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
 Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of
 sand,
 Left on the shore; that hears all night
 The plunging seas draw backward from
 the land
 Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance
 Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw
 The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
 Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had
 cul'd.

'No voice,' she shriek'd in that lone
 hall,
 'No voice breaks thro' the stillness of
 this world:
 One deep, deep silence all!'

She, mouldering with the dull earth's
 mouldering sod,
 Inwapt tenfold in slothful shame,
 Lay there exiled from eternal God,
 Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,
 And nothing saw, for her despair,
 But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
 No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
 And ever worse with growing time,
 And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
 And all alone in cume:

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round
 With blackness as a solid wall,
 Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound
 Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking
 slow,
 In doubt and great perplexity,
 A little before moon-rise hears the low
 Moan of an unknown sea;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
 Of rocks thrown down, or one deep
 cry
 Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, 'I
 have found
 A new land, but I die.

She howl'd aloud, 'I am on fire within.
 There comes no murmur of reply.
 What is it that will take away my sin,
 And save me lest I die?'

So when four years were wholly finished,
 She threw her royal robes away.
 'Make me a cottage in the vale,' she said,
 'Where I may mourn and pray.

'Yet pull not down my palace towers,
that are
So lightly, beautifully built :
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt.'

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Of me you shall not win renown :
You thought to break a country heart
For pastime, ere you went to town.
At me you smiled, but unbeguled
I saw the snare, and I retired :
The daughter of a hundred Eails,
You are not one to be desued.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that doats on true charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meeker pupil you must find,
For were you queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind
You sought to prove how I could love,
And my disdain is my reply.
The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You put strange memories in my head.
Not thrice your blanching limes have
blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
Oh your sweet eyes, your low replies :
A great enchantress you may be ;
But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
When thus he met his mother's view,
She had the passions of her kind,
She spake some certain truths of you.
Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear ;
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
There stands a spectre in your hall :
The guilt of blood is at your door :
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.
You held your course without remorse,
To make him trust his modest worth,
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent
The gardener Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,
You pine among your halls and towers :
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as
these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
If time be heavy on your hands,
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands ?
Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish yeoman go.

THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear ;
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year ;
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day ;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright as mine ;
There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline :
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break :
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree ?
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday,
But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,
And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be :
They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that to me ?
There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me made the Queen ;
For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,
And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-flowers ;
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass ;
There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily glance and play,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

'So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year :
To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear,
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set : he set and left behind
The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind ;
And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers : we had a merry day ;
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May ;
And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse,
Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills : the frost is on the pane :
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again .
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high :
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer o'er the wave,
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine,
In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,
Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light
You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night ;
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.
I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear you when you pass,
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now ;
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go ,

Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,
You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place ;
Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face ;
Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall harken what you say,
And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight for evermore,
And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door ;
Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green :
She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor :
Let her take 'em : they are hers : I shall never garden more :
But tell her, when I'm gone, to trim the rosebush that I set
About the parlour-window and the box of mignonette.

Goodnight, sweet mother : call me before the day is born.
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn ;
But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,
So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;
And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.
How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !
To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,
And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun,
And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done !
But still I think it can't be long before I find release ;
And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !
And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there !
O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !
A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.
Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in :
No! would I now be well, mother, again if that could be,
For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,
There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet :
But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd,
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,
And then did something speak to me—I know not what was said ;
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came again the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping ; and I said, ' It's not for them : it's mine.'
And if it come three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret ;
There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife ;
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow ;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may shine—
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done
The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun—
For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—
And what is life, that we should moan ? why make we such ado ?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—
And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come—
To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast—
And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

'COURAGE!' he said, and pointed toward
the land,

'This mounting wave will roll us shore-
ward soon.'

In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the languid air did
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the
moon;

And like a downward smoke, the slender
stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall
did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a down-
ward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did
go;

And some thro' wavering lights and
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward
flow

From the inner land: far off, three
mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd: and, dew'd with
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West: thro' mountain clefts
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Border'd with palm, and many a winding
vale

And meadow, set with slender galingale;
A land where all things always seem'd
the same!

And round about the keel with faces
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they
gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,

His voice was thin, as voices from the
grave;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow
sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the
shore;

And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but ever-
more

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the
oar,

Weary the wandering fields of barren
foam.

Then some one said, 'We will return no
more;'

And all at once they sang, 'Our island
home

Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer
roam.'

CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between
walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentler on the spout lies,
Than tiri'd eyelids upon tiri'd eyes;

Music that brings sweet sleep down from
the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers
weep,

And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from
weariness?

All things have rest : why should we toil
alone,

We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy
balm ;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
'There is no joy but calm !'
Why should we only toil, the roof and
crown of things?

III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no
toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labour be ?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and become.
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we
have
To war with evil ? Is there any peace

In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward
the grave
In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death,
or dreamful ease.

V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-
ward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder amber
light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on
the height ;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping nipples on the
beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melan-
choly ;
To muse and brood and live again in
memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an
urn of brass !

VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath
suffer'd change :
For surely now our household hearths are
cold :
Our sons inherit us : our looks are
strange :
And we should come like ghosts to trouble
joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel
sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten
things.
Is there confusion in the little isle ?
Let what is broken so remain.

The Gods are hard to reconcile :
 'Tis hard to settle order once again.
 There is confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 Long labour unto aged breath,
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the
 pilot-stars.

VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us,
 blowing lowly)
 With half-dropt eyelid still,
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
 To watch the long bright river drawing
 slowly
 His waters from the purple hill—
 To hear the dewy echoes calling
 From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined
 vine—
 To watch the emerald-colour'd water
 falling
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath
 divine !
 Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling
 brine,
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
 beneath the pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
 All day the wind breathes low with
 mellower tone :
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
 Round and round the spicy downs the
 yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
 We have had enough of action, and of
 motion we,
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
 when the surge was seething free,
 Where the wallowing monster spouted
 his foam-fountains in the sea.
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with
 an equal mind,
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie
 reclined
 On the hills like Gods together, careless
 of mankind.

For they lie beside their nectar, and the
 bolts are hurl'd
 Far below them in the valleys, and the
 clouds are lightly curl'd
 Round their golden houses, girdled with
 the gleaming world :
 Where they smile in secret, looking over
 wasted lands,
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake,
 roaring deeps and fiery sands,
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and
 sinking ships, and praying hands.
 But they smile, they find a music centred
 in a doleful song
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient
 tale of wrong,
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the
 words are strong ;
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men
 that cleave the soil,
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with
 enduring toil,
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and
 wine and oil ;
 Till they perish and they suffer—some,
 'tis whisper'd—down in hell
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian
 valleys dwell,
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of
 asphodel.

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet
 than toil, the shore
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind
 and wave and oar ;
 Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will
 not wander more.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,
 'The Legend of Good Women,' long ago
 Sung by the morning star of song, who
 made

His music heard below ;

• Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose
 sweet breath

Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth
 With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his
art

Held me above the subject, as strong
gales

Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'
my heart,

Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In
every land

I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient
song

Peopled the hollow dark, like burning
stars,

And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and
wrong,

And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clanging
hoofs ;

And I saw crowds in column'd sanctu-
aries ;

And forms that pass'd at windows and on
roofs

Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet

Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with
heated blasts

That run before the fluttering tongues
of fire ;

White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and
masts,

And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen
plates,

Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers
woes,

Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron
grates,

And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when
to land

Bluster the winds and tides the self-same
way,

Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level
sand,

Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove
to speak,

As when a great thought strikes along
the brain,
And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing
thought

Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and
did creep

Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd,
and brought

Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd far
In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in coolest
dew

The maiden splendours of the morningstar
Shook in the stedfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and
lean

Upon the dusky brushwood underneath
Their broad curved branches, fledged with
clearest green,
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey
done,

And with dead lips smiled at the twi-
light plain,

Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine
turn'd

Their humid arms festooning tree to
tree,
And at the root thro' lush green grasses
burn'd
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I
knew

The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks
drench'd in dew,
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Pour'd back into my empty soul and
frame

The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unbliss-
ful clime,

'Pass freely thro': the wood is all thine
own,
Until the end of time.'

At length I saw a lady within call,
Stillter than chisell'd marble, standing
there;

A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with sur-
prise

Froze my swift speech: she turning on
my face

The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place.

'I had great beauty: ask thou not my
name:

No one can be more wise than destiny.
Many drew swords and died. Where'er
I came

I brought calamity.'

'No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair field
Myself for such a face had boldly died,'
I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,
To her full height her stately stature
draws;

'My youth,' she said, 'was blasted with
a curse:

This woman was the cause.

'I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
Which men call'd Aulis in those iron
years:

My father held his hand upon his face;
I, blinded with my tears,

'Still strove to speak: my voice was
thick with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with wolf-
ish eyes,

Waiting to see me die.

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat;
The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and
the shore;

The bright death quiver'd at the victim's
throat;

Touch'd; and I knew no more.'

Whereto the other with a downward brow:

'I would the white cold heavy-plung-
ing foam,

Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep
below,

Then when I left my home.'

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence
drear,

As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea:
Sudden I heard a voice that cried, 'Come
here,

That I may look on thee.'

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd;

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold
black eyes,

Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began:

'I govern'd men by change, and so I
sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen
a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

'The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humour ebb and flow.
I have no men to govern in this wood :
That makes my only woe.

'Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not
bend
One will ; nor tame and tutor with
mine eye
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee,
friend,
Where is Mark Antony ?

'The man, my lover, with whom I rode
sublime
On Fortune's neck : we sat as God by
God :
The Nilus would have risen before his time
And flooded at our nod.

'We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep,
and lit
Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O
my life
In Egypt ! O the dalliance and the wit,
The flattery and the strife,

'And the wild kiss, when fresh from war's
alarms,
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,
Contented there to die !

'And there he died : and when I heard
my name
Sigh'd forth with life I would not brook
my fear
Of the other : with a worm I balk'd his
fame.
What else was left ? look here !'

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half
The polish'd argent of her breast to
sight
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a
laugh,
Showing the aspick's bite.)

'I died a Queen. The Roman soldier
found
Me lying dead, my crown about my
brows,

A name for ever !—lying robed and
crown'd,
Worthy a Roman spouse.'

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range
Struck by all passion, did fall down
and glance
From tone to tone, and glided thro' all
change
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for
delight ;
Because with sudden motion from the
ground
She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd with
light
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest
darts ;
As once they drew into two burning rings
All beams of Love, melting the mighty
hearts
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard
A noise of some one coming thro' the
lawn,
And singing clearer than the crested bird
That claps his wings at dawn.

'The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and
soon,
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the
dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.

'The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with
beams divine :
All night the splinter'd crags that wall
the dell
With spires of silver shine.'

As one that museth where broad sunshine
laves
The lawn by some cathedra, thro' the
door
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and
tied

To where he stands,—so stood I, when
that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure ; as when she went
along
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome
light,
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : ' Heaven heads
the count of crimes
With that wild oath.' She render'd
answer high :

' Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand times
I would be born and die.

' Single I grew, like some green plant,
whose root
Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-
neath,
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower
to fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

' My God, my land, my father—these did
move
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature
gave,
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of
love
Down to a silent grave.

' And I went mourning, "No fair Hebrew
boy
Shall smile away my maiden blame
among
The Hebrew mothers"—emptied of all
joy,
Leaving the dance and song,

' Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
Leaving the promise of my bridal
bower,
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that
glow
Beneath the battled tower.

' The light white cloud swam over us.
Anon

We heard the lion roaring from his den ;
We saw the large white stars rise one by
one,
Or, from the darken'd glen,

' Saw God divide the night with flying
flame,
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief
became
A solemn scorn of ills.

' When the next moon was roll'd into
the sky,
Strength came to me that equal'd my
desire.

How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire !

' It comforts me in this one thought to
dwell,
That I subdued me to my father's will ;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
Sweetens the spirit still.

' Moreover it is written that my race
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from
Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth.' Here her face
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips : she left me where I
stood :

' Glory to God,' she sang, and past
afar,

Thudding the sombre boskage of the wood,
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,
As one that from a casement leans his
head,
When midnight bells cease ringing sud-
denly,
And the old year is dead.

' Alas ! alas !' a low voice, full of care,
Murmur'd beside me : ' Turn and look
on me :
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,
If what I was I be.

'Would I had been some maiden coarse
and poor !

O me, that I should ever see the light !
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor
Do hunt me, day and night.'

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and
trust :

To whom the Egyptian : 'O, you
tamely died !
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,
and thrust
The dagger thro' her side.'

With that sharp sound the white dawn's
creeping beams,

Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery
Of folded sleep. The captain of my
dreams
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the
dark,
Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last
trance
Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of
Arc,
A light of ancient France ;

O! her who knew that Love can vanquish
Death,
Who kneeling, with one arm about
her king,
Drew forth the poison with her balmy
breath,
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labours longer from the deep
Gold-mines of thought to lift the
hidden ore
That glimpses, moving up, than I from
sleep
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what
dull pain
Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to
strike
Into that wondrous track of dreams
again !
But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath been
blest,

Desiring what is mingled with past
years,
In yearnings that can never be exprest
By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with choicest
art,

Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
Faints, faded by its heat.

THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD ! sing me something well :
While all the neighbours shoot thee
round,
I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,
Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
Are thine ; the range of lawn and
park :
The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,
With that gold dagger of thy bill
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill ! the silver tongue,
Cold February loved, is dry :
Plenty corrupts the melody
That made thee famous once, when
young :

And in the sultry garden-squares,
Now thy flute-notes are changed to
coarse,
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawk hawks his wares.

Take warning ! he that will not sing
While yon sun prospers in the blue,
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are
new,
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sigh-
ing :

Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die ;
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still : he doth not move :
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above.
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,
And the New-year will take 'em away.

Old year, you must not go ;
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;
A jollier year we shall not see
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die ;
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my
friend,
And the New-year blithe and bold,
my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes ! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro :
The cricket chirps : the light burns low :
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands, before you die.
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :
What is it we can do for you ?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack ! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my
friend,
And a new face at the door, my
friend,
A new face at the door.

TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain, blows
More softly round the open wold,
And gently comes the world to those
That are cast in gentle mould

And me this knowledge bolder made,
Or else I had not dared to flow
In these words toward you, and invade
Even with a verse your holy woe.

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,
Those in whose laps our limbs are
nursed,
Fall into shadow, soonest lost -
Those we love first are taken first.

God gives us love. Something to love
He lends us ; but, when love is grown
To ripeness, that on which it thrives
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas !
In grief I am not all unlearn'd ;
Once tho' mine own doors Death did
pass ;
One went, who never hath return'd.

He will not smile—not speak to me
Once more. Two years his chair is
seen
Empty before us. That was he
Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer ; for this star
 Rose with you thro' a little arc
 Of heaven, nor having wander'd far
 Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother : his mute dust
 I honour and his living worth :
 A man more pure and bold and just
 Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,
 Since that dearsoul hath fall'n asleep.
 Great Nature is more wise than I .
 I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,
 Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,
 I will not even preach to you,
 ' Weep, weeping dulls the inward
 pain.'

Let Grief be her own mistress still.
 She loveth her own anguish deep
 More than much pleasure. Let her will
 Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, ' God's ordinance
 Of Death is blown in every wind ;'
 For that is not a common chance
 That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone
 In all our hearts, as mournful light
 That broods above the fallen sun,
 And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace ! Memory standing near
 Cast down her eyes, and in her
 throat

Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear
 Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,
 How *should* I soothe you anyway,
 Who miss the brother of your youth ?
 Yet something I did wish to say :

For he too was a friend to me :
 Both are my friends, and my true
 breast
 Bleedeth for both ; yet it may be
 That only silence suteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would
 make
 Grief more. 'Twere better I should
 cease
 Although myself could almost take
 The place of him that sleeps in
 peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace :
 Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
 While the stars burn, the moons increase,
 And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.
 Nothing comes to thee new or strange.
 Sleep full of rest from head to feet ;
 Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

ON A MOURNER.

I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,
 Imitates God, and turns her face
 To every land beneath the skies,
 Counts nothing that she meets with
 base,
 But lives and loves in every place ;

II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,
 And makes the purple lilac ripe,
 Steps from her airy hill, and greens
 The swamp, where hums the dropping
 snipe,
 With moss and braided marsh-pipe ;

III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,
 Saying, ' Beat quicker, for the time
 Is pleasant, and the woods and ways
 Are pleasant, and the beech and lime
 Put forth and feel a gladder clime.'

IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,
 Going before to some far shrine,
 Teach that sick heart the stronger choice,
 Till all thy life one way incline
 With one wide Will that closes thine.

V.

And when the zoning eve has died
Where yon dark valleys' wind forlorn,
Come Hope and Memory, spouse and
bride,

From out the borders of the morn,
With that fair child betwixt them born.

VI.

And when no mortal motion jars
The blackness round the tombing sod,
Thro' silence and the trembling stars
Comes Faith from tracts no feet have
trod,
And Virtue, like a household god

VII.

Promising empire; such as those
Once heard at dead of night to greet
Troy's wandering prince, so that he rose
With sacrifice, while all the fleet
Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends or
foes

A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens
down

From precedent to precedent:

Where faction seldom gathers head,
But by degrees to fullness wrought,
The strength of some diffusive thought
Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute
Opinion, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute;

Tho' Power should make from land to
land

The name of Britain trebly great—
Tho' every channel of the State
Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,
Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet:
Above her shook the starry lights:
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stopt she down thro' town and field
To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isle-altar gazing down,
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
And, King-like, wears the crown.

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and shine,
Make bright our days and light our
dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes!

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-brought
From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen, friends,
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
Nor feed with crude imaginings
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings
That every sophister can lme.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for
day,
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds;
But let her herald, Reverece, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years ·
Cut Prejudice against the grain ·
But gentle words are always gain :
Regard the weakness of thy peers ·

Nor toil for title, place, or touch
Of pension, neither count on praise :
It grows to guerdon after-days :
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch ·

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;
Not master'd by some modern term ;
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm :
And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly,
binds—
Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Thro' many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should controul
Our being, lest we rust in ease.
We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that which flies,
And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom—
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school ;
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,
But vague in vapour, hard to mark ;
And round them sea and air are dark
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,
Is bodied forth the second whole.
Regard gradation, lest the soul
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,
And heap their ashes on the head ;
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall close,
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
But with his hand against the hilt,
Would pace the troubled land, like
Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
 Would serve his kind in deed and word,
 Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
 That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke
 From either side, nor veil his eyes :
 And if some dreadful need should rise
 Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
 As we bear blossom of the dead ;
 Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed
 Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782.

O THOU, that sendest out the man
 To rule by land and sea,
 Strong mother of a Lion-line,
 Be proud of those strong sons of thine
 Who wrench'd their rights from thee !

What wonder, if in noble heat
 Those men thine arms withstood,
 Retought the lesson thou hadst taught,
 And in thy spirit with thee fought—
 Who spang from English blood !

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,
 Lift up thy rocky face,
 And shatter, when the storms are black,
 In many a steaming torrent back,
 The seas that shock thy base !

Whatever harmonies of law
 The growing world assume,
 Thy work is thine—The single note
 From that deep chord which Hampden
 smote
 Will vibrate to the doom.

THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,
 Her rags scarce held together ;
 There strode a stranger to the door,
 And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,
 He utter'd rhyme and reason,
 'Here, take the goose, and keep you
 warm,
 It is a stormy season.'

She caught the white goose by the leg,
 A goose—'twas no great matter.
 The goose let fall a golden egg
 With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the
 pelf,
 And ran to tell her neighbours ;
 And bless'd herself, and cursed herself,
 And rested from her labours.

And feeding high, and living soft,
 Grew plump and able-bodied ;
 Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,
 The parson smil'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,
 She felt her heart grow prouder :
 But ah ! the more the white goose laud
 It clack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there ;
 It stir'd the old wife's mettle :
 She shifted in her elbow-chair,
 And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

'A quinsy choke thy cursed note !'
 Then wax'd her anger stronger.
 'Go, take the goose, and wring her throat,
 I will not bear it longer.'

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the cat ;
 Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.
 The goose flew this way and flew that,
 And fill'd the house with clamour.

As head and heels upon the floor
 They flounder'd all together,
 There strode a stranger to the door,
 And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,
 He utter'd words of scorning ;
 'So keep you cold, or keep you warm,
 It is a stormy morning.'

The wild wind rang from park and plain,
And round the attics rumbled,
Till all the tables danced again,
And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,
The blast was hard and haider.

Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,
And a whirlwind clear'd the larder :

And while on all sides breaking loose
Her household fled the danger,
Quoth she, 'The Devil take the goose,
And God forget the stranger !'

ENGLISH IDYLLS

AND OTHER POEMS.

THE EPIC.

AT Francis Allen's on the Christmas-
eve,—

The game of forfeits done—the girls all
kiss'd

Beneath the sacred bush and past away—
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard
Hall,

The host, and I sat round the wassail-
bowl,

Then half-way ebb'd : and there we held
a talk,

How all the old honour had from Christmas
gone,

Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd
games

In some odd nooks like this ; till I, tired
out

With cutting eights that day upon the
pond,

Where, three times slipping from the
outer edge,

I bump'd the ice into three several stars,
Fell in a doze ; and half-awake I heard

The parson taking wide and wider
sweeps,

Now harping on the church-commis-
sioners,

Now hawking at Geology and schism ;
Until I woke, and found him settled down

Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world, 'at home was little
left,

And none abroad : there was no anchor,
none,

To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt
his hand

On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by
him.'

'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-
bowl.'

'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew you gift
that way

At college : but another which you had,
I mean of verse (for so we held it then),

What came of that ?' 'You know,' said
Frank, 'he burnt

His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve
books'—

And then to me demanding why ? 'Oh,
sir,

He thought that nothing new was said,
or else

Something so said 'twas nothing—that a
truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day :
God knows : he has a mint of reasons : ask

It pleased *me* well enough.' 'Nay, nay,'
said Hall,

'Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,

Nor we those times ; and why should any
man

Remodel models ? these twelve books of
mine

Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-
worth,

And sparkled keen with frost against the
hilt :

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift
mind,

In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere :

' Hast thou perform'd my mission which
I gave ?

What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast
heard ?

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
' I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint
and pale :

' Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy
name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the
mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in
thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud,

' And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,

Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of
many men.

What good should follow this, if this were
done ?

What harm, undone ? deep harm to dis-
obey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself ?

The King is sick, and knows not what he
does.

What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt ? but were this
kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty
kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, " King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the
deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills."

So might some old man speak in the
aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honour and much fame
were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own
conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded
King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing
heavily :

' What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast
heard ?

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

' I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much
in wrath.

' Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !

Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye

That bow'd the will. I see thee what
thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious
hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee
hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and
ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the
sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendour of the
moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd
in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter
shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :

But ere he dipt the surface, rose an aim
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
derful,

And caught him by the hilt, and bran-
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing
thicker breath :

'Now see I by thine eyes that this is
done.

Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or
seen ?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the
gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheel-
ing him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
derful,

That caught him by the hilt, and bran-
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breath-
ing hard :

'My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my
weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall
die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half
rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found
not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on
one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid
hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted
hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd

the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear,
'Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to
ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as
he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills.

He heard the deep behind him, and a
cry

Before. His own thought drove him, like
a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and
right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him,
as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smutten with the dint of armed
heels—

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky
barge,

Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were
ware

That all the decks were dense with stately
forms

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream
—by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold—and
from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one
comes,

Or hath come, since the making of the
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in
the barge,'

And to the barge they came. There those
three Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the King,
and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complaining
loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face
was white

And colourless, and like the wither'd
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the springing
east ;

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
with drops

Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd
with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that
fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in
rest,

From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
'Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I
go ?

Where shall I hide my forehead and my
eyes ?

For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble
knight.

Such times have been not since the light
that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is
dissolved

Which was an image of the mighty world ;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the
years,

Among new men, strange faces, other
minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the
barge :

'The old order changeth, yielding place
to new,

And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the
world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
I have lived my life, and that which I
have done

May He within Himself make pure ! but
thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are

wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,
let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day
For what are men better than sheep or
goats

That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of
prayer

Both for themselves and those who call
them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of
God.

But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—

(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion ;

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-
lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with summer
sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous
wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and
sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-
breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
the flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge
of dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died away.

HERE ended Hall, and our last light,
that long

Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,
flared and fell :

At which the Parson, sent to sleep with
sound,

And waked with silence, grunted 'Good !'
but we

Sat rapt : it was the tone with which he
read—

Perhaps some modern touches here and
there

Redeem'd it from the charge of nothing-
ness—

Or else we loved the man, and prized his

I know not : but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud ; as at that time
of year

The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn :
Then Francis, muttering, like a man
ill-used,

'There now—that's nothing !' drew a
little back,

And drove his heel into the smoulder'd
log,

That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue :
And so to bed ; where yet in sleep I seem'd

To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point ; till on to dawn, when
dreams

Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a
crowd,

There came a bark that, blowing forward,
bore

King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port ; and all the people

cried,
'Arthur is come again : he cannot die.'

Then those that stood upon the hills
behind

Repeated—'Come again, and thence as
fair ;'

And, further inland, voices echoed—
'Come

With all good things, and war shall be
no more.'

At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard

indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the

Christmas-morn.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER ;

OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the day,
When I and Eustace from the city went
To see the Gardener's Daughter ; I and he,
Brothers in Art ; a friendship so complete
Portion'd in halves between us, that we
grew

The fable of the city where we dwelt.

My Eustace might have sat for Hercules;
 So muscular he spread, so broad of breast.
 He, by some law that holds in love, and
 draws
 The greater to the lesser, long desired
 A certain miracle of symmetry,
 A miniature of loveliness, all grace
 Summ'd up and closed in little ;—Juliet,
 she
 So light of foot, so light of spirit—oh, she
 To me myself, for some three careless
 moons,
 The summer pilot of an empty heart
 Unto the shores of nothing! Know you not
 Such touches are but embassies of love,
 To tamper with the feelings, ere he found
 Empire for life? but Eustace painted her,
 And said to me, she sitting with us then,
 'When will *you* paint like this?' and I
 replied,
 (My words were half in earnest, half in
 jest,)
 'Tis not your work, but Love's. Love,
 unperceived,
 A more ideal Artist he than all,
 Came, drew your pencil from you, made
 those eyes
 Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair
 More black than ashbuds in the front of
 March.'
 And Juliet answer'd laughing, 'Go and see
 The Gardener's daughter: trust me, after
 that,
 You scarce can fail to match his master-
 piece.'
 And up we rose, and on the spur we went
 Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
 Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love
 News from the humming city comes to it
 In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
 And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you
 hear
 The windy clanging of the minster clock;
 Although between it and the garden lies
 A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad
 stream,
 That stir'd with languid pulses of the oar,
 Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,
 Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
 Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between
 Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-udder'd
 kine,
 And all about the large lime feathers low,
 The lime a summer home of murmurous
 wings.
 In that still place she, hoarded in herself,
 Grew, seldom seen; not less among us
 lived
 Her fame from lip to lip. Who had not
 heard
 Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter? Where
 was he,
 So blunt in memory, so old at heart,
 At such a distance from his youth in grief,
 That, having seen, forgot? The common
 mouth,
 So gross to express delight, in praise of
 her
 Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,
 And Beauty such a mistress of the world.
 And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,
 Would play with flying foms and images,
 Yet this is also true, that, long before
 I look'd upon her, when I heard her name
 My heart was like a prophet to my heart,
 And told me I should love. A crowd of
 hopes,
 That sought to sow themselves like
 winged seeds,
 Born out of everything I heard and saw,
 Flutter'd about my senses and my soul;
 And vague desires, like fitful blasts of
 balm
 To one that travels quickly, made the air
 Of Life delicious, and all kinds of thought,
 That verged upon them, sweeter than the
 dream
 Dream'd by a happy man, when the dark
 East,
 Unseen, is brightening to his bridal morn.
 And sure this orbit of the memory folds
 For ever in itself the day we went
 To see her. All the land in flowery
 squares,
 Beneath a broad and equal-blowing wind,
 Smelt of the coming summer, as one large
 cloud
 Drew downward: but all else of heaven
 was pure

Up to the Sun, and May from verge to verge,
 And May with me from head to heel.
 And now,
 As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it were
 The hour just flown, that morn with all
 its sound,
 (For those old Mays had thrice the life
 of these,) Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot to
 graze,
 And, where the hedge-row cuts the
 pathway, stood,
 Leaning his horns into the neighbour field,
 And lowing to his fellows. From the
 woods
 Came voices of the well-contented doves.
 The laik could scarce get out his notes
 for joy,
 But shook his song together as he near'd
 His happy home, the ground. To left
 and right,
 The cuckoo told his name to all the hills;
 The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm;
 The redcap whistled; and the nightingale
 Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of day.
 And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said
 to me,
 'Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,
 These birds have joyful thoughts. Think
 you they sing
 Like poets, from the vanity of song?
 Or have they any sense of why they sing?
 And would they praise the heavens for
 what they have?'
 And I made answer, 'Were there nothing
 else
 For which to praise the heavens but only
 love,
 That only love were cause enough for
 praise.'
 Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read
 my thought,
 And on we went; but ere an hour had
 pass'd,
 We reach'd a meadow slanting to the
 North;
 Down which a well-worn pathway counted
 us
 To one green wicket in a privet hedge;

This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk
 Tho' crowded lilac-ambush trimly pruned;
 And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume,
 blew
 Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.
 The garden stretches southward. In the
 midst
 A cedar spread his dark-green layers of
 shade.
 The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily
 The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.
 'Eustace,' I said, 'this wonder keeps
 the house.'
 He nodded, but a moment afterwards
 He cried, 'Look! look!' Before he ceased
 I turn'd,
 And, ere a star can wink, beheld her
 there.
 For up the porch there grew an Eastern
 rose,
 That, flowering high, the last night's gale
 had caught,
 And blown across the walk. One arm
 aloft—
 Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the
 shape—
 Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood,
 A single stream of all her soft brown hair
 Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the
 flowers
 Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering
 Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—
 Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering
 down,
 But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have
 danced
 The greensward into greener circles, dipt,
 And mix'd with shadows of the common
 ground!
 But the full day dwelt on her brows, and
 sunn'd
 Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,
 And doubled his own warmth against her
 lips,
 And on the bounteous wave of such a
 breast
 As never pencil drew. Half light, half
 shade,
 She stood, a sight to make an old man
 young.

So rapt, we near'd the house ; but she,
 a Rose
 In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,
 Nor heard us come, nor from her tendance
 turn'd
 Into the world without ; till close at hand,
 And almost ere I knew mine own intent,
 This murmur broke the stillness of that
 air
 Which blooded round about her :
 'Ah, one rose,
 One rose, but one, by those fair fingers
 cull'd,
 Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on
 lips
 Less exquisite than thine.'
 She look'd : but all
 Suffused with blushes—neither self-pos-
 sess'd
 Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and
 that,
 Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,
 And dropt the branch she held, and turn-
 ing, wound
 Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her
 lips
 For some sweet answer, tho' no answer
 came,
 Nor yet refused the rose, but granted it,
 And moved away, and left me, statue-like,
 In act to render thanks.
 I, that whole day,
 Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there
 Till every daisy slept, and Love's white
 star
 Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the
 dusk
 So home we went, and all the livelong
 way
 With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me
 'Now,' said he, 'will you climb the top
 of Art.
 You cannot fail but work in hues to dim
 The Titanic Floa Will you match
 My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master,
 Love,
 A more ideal Artist he than all.'
 So home I went, but could not sleep
 for joy,
 Reading her perfect features in the gloom,

Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and o'er,
 And shaping faithful record of the glance
 That graced the giving—such a noise of
 life
 Swarm'd in the golden present, such a
 voice
 Call'd to me from the years to come, and
 such
 A length of blight horizon rimm'd the
 dark.
 And all that night I heard the watchman
 peal
 The sliding season : all that night I heard
 The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy
 hours.
 The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,
 O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,
 Distilling odours on me as they went
 To greet their fairer sisters of the East.
 Love at first sight, first-born, and heir
 to all,
 Made this night thus. Henceforward
 squall nor storm
 Could keep me from that Eden where she
 dwelt.
 Light prettexts drew me ; sometimes a
 Dutch love
 For tulips ; then for roses, moss or musk,
 To grace my city rooms, or fruits and
 cream
 Served in the weeping elm ; and more and
 more
 A word could bring the colour to my
 cheek ;
 A thought would fill my eyes with happy
 dew ;
 Love trebled life within me, and with
 each
 The year increased.
 The daughters of the year,
 One after one, thro' that still garden
 pass'd ;
 Each gailanded with her peculiar flower
 Danced into light, and died into the
 shade ;
 And each in passing touch'd with some
 new grace
 Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by
 day,
 Like one that never can be wholly known,

Her beauty grew ; till Autumn brought
 an hour
 For Eustace, when I heard his deep ' I
 will,'
 Breathed, like the covenant of a God, to
 hold
 From thence thro' all the worlds : but I
 rose up
 Full of his bliss, and following her dark
 eyes
 Felt earth as air beneath me, till I reach'd
 The wicket-gate, and found her standing
 there.

There sat we down upon a garden
 mound,
 Two mutually enfolded ; Love, the third,
 Between us, in the circle of his arms
 Enwound us both ; and over many a range
 Of waning lime the gray cathedral towers,
 Across a hazy glimmer of the west,
 Reveal'd their shining windows . from
 them clash'd
 The bells ; we listen'd ; with the time
 we play'd,
 We spoke of other things ; we couised
 about
 The subject most at heart, more near and
 near,
 Like doves about a dovecote, wheeling
 round
 The central wish, until we settled there.

Then, in that time and place, I spoke
 to her,
 Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own,
 Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,
 Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,
 A woman's heart, the heart of her I loved ;
 And in that time and place she answer'd
 me,
 And in the compass of three little words,
 More musical than ever came in one,
 The silver fragments of a broken voice,
 Made me most happy, faltering, ' I am
 thine.'

Shall I cease here ? Is this enough to
 say
 That my desire, like all strongest hopes,
 By its own energy fulfil'd itself,
 Merged in completion ? Would you learn
 at full

How passion rose thro' circumstantial
 grades

Beyond all grades develop'd ? and indeed
 I had not staid so long to tell you all,
 But while I mused came Memory with
 sad eyes,

Holding the folded annals of my youth ;
 And while I mused, Love with knit brows
 went by,

And with a flying finger swept my lips,
 And spake, ' Be wise : not easily forgiven
 Are those, who setting wide the doors that
 bar

The secret bridal chambers of the heart,
 Let in the day.' Here, then, my words
 have end.

Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-
 wells—

Of that which came between, more sweet
 than each,

In whispers, like the whispers of the
 leaves

That tremble round a nightingale—in
 sighs

Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-
 ance,

Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I
 not tell

Of difference, reconciliation, pledges
 given,

And vows, where there was never need
 of vows,

And kisses, where the heart on one wild
 leap

Hung tranced from all pulsation, as above
 The heavens between their fairy fleeces
 pale

Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleeting
 stars ;

Or while the balmy glooming, crescent-lit,
 Spread the light haze along the river-
 shores,

And in the hollows ; or as once we met
 Unheedful, tho' beneath a whispering
 ram

Night slid down one long stream of sigh-
 ing wind,

And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.

But this whole hour your eyes have
 been intent

On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what it holds

May not be dwelt on by the common day.
This prelude has prepared thee. Raise thy soul ;

Make thine heart ready with thine eyes :
the time

Is come to raise the veil.

Behold her there,
As I beheld her ere she knew my heart,
My first, last love ; the idol of my youth,
The darling of my manhood, and, alas !
Now the most blessed memory of mine age.

DORA.

'ITH farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his son,
And she his niece. He often look'd at them,

And often thought, 'I'll make them man
and wife.'

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearn'd towards William ; but the youth, because

He had been always with her in the house,
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said,
'My son :

I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I die :
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora ; she is well
To look to ; thirty too beyond her age.
She is my brother's daughter : he and I
Had once had words, and parted, and
he died

In foreign lands ; but for his sake I bled
His daughter Dora : take her for your
wife ;

For I have wish'd this marriage, night
and day,

For many years.' But William answer'd
short ;

'I cannot marry Dora ; by my life,
I will not marry Dora ' Then the old man
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,
and said :

'You will not, boy ! you dare to answer
thus !

But in my time a father's word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to
it ;

Consider, William : take a month to
think,

And let me have an answer to my wish ;
O, by the Lord that made me, you shall
pack,

And never more darken my doors again.'
But William answer'd madly ; bit his
lips,

And broke away. The more he look'd
at her

The less he liked her ; and his ways were
harsh ;

But Dora bore them meekly. Then
before

The month was out he left his father's
house,

And hired himself to work within the
fields ;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd and
wed

A labourer's daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing,
Allan call'd

His niece and said : 'My girl, I love you
well ;

But if you speak with him that was my
son,

Or change a word with her he calls his
wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is
law.'

And Dora promised, being meek. She
thought,

'It cannot be : my uncle's mind will
change !'

And days went on, and there was born
a boy

To William ; then distresses came on
him ;

And day by day he pass'd his father's
gate,

Heart-broken, and his father help'd him
not.

But Dora stored what little she could
save,

And sent it them by stealth, nor did they know

Who sent it ; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he died.

Then Dora went to Mary Mary sat
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and
thought

Haid things of Dora. Dora came and
said :

' I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me
This evil came on William at the first.

But, Mary, for the sake of him that's
gone,

And for your sake, the woman that he
chose,

And for this orphan, I am come to you .
You know there has not been for these
five years

So full a harvest : let me take the boy,
And I will set him in my uncle's eye
Among the wheat, that when his heart
is glad

Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,
And bless him for the sake of him that's
gone.'

And Dora took the child, and went
her way

Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound
That was unsown, where many poppies
grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not ; for none of all his
men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the child ;
And Dora would have risen and gone to
him,

But her heart fail'd her ; and the reapers
reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was
dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose
and took

The child once more, and sat upon the
mound ;

And made a little wreath of all the flowers
That grew about, and tied it round his hat
To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field
He spied her, and he left his men at work,

And came and said : ' Where were you
yesterday ?

Whose child is that ? What are you doing
here ?'

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,
And answer'd softly, ' This is William's
child !'

' And did I not,' said Allan, ' did I not
Forbid you, Dora ?' Dora said again :
' Do with me as you will, but take the
child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's
gone !'

And Allan said, ' I see it is a trick
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.
I must be taught my duty, and by you !
You knew my word was law, and yet you
dared

To slight it Well—for I will take the
boy ;

But go you hence, and never see me more.'
So saying, he took the boy that cried
aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of
flowers fell

At Dora's feet She bow'd upon her
hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the
field,

More and more distant. She bow'd
down her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,
And all the things that had been. She
bow'd down

And wept in secret ; and the reapers
reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was
dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and
stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy
Was not with Dora. She broke out in
praise

To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.
And Dora said, ' My uncle took the boy ;
But, Mary, let me live and work with you :
He says that he will never see me more.'
Then answer'd Mary, ' This shall never be,
That thou shouldst take my trouble on
thyself :

And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,
 For he will teach him hardness, and to slight
 His mother ; therefore thou and I will go,
 And I will have my boy, and bring him home ;
 And I will beg of him to take thee back :
 But if he will not take thee back again,
 Then thou and I will live within one house,
 And work for William's child, until he grows
 Of age to help us.' So the women kiss'd
 Each other, and set out, and reach'd the farm
 The door was off the latch . they peep'd,
 and saw
 The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's knees,
 Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
 And clapt him on the hands and on the cheeks,
 Like one that loved him : and the lad stretch'd out
 And babbled for the golden seal, that hung
 From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the fire.
 Then they came in : but when the boy beheld
 His mother, he cried out to come to her :
 And Allan set him down, and Mary said :
 ' O Father !—if you let me call you so—
 I never came a-begging for myself,
 Or William, or this child ; but now I come
 For Dora . take her back ; she loves you well.
 O Sir, when William died, he died at peace
 With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he said,
 He could not ever rue his marrying me—
 I had been a patient wife : but, Sir, he said
 That he was wrong to cross his father thus :

" God bless him !" he said, " and may he never know
 The troubles I have gone thro' !" Then he turn'd
 His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am !
 But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
 Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight
 His father's memory ; and take Dora back,
 And let all this be as it was before.'
 So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
 By Mary. There was silence in the room ;
 And all at once the old man burst in sobs :—
 ' I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd my son.
 I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son.
 May God forgive me !—I have been to blame.
 Kiss me, my children.' Then they clung about
 The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times.
 And all the man was broken with remorse ;
 And all his love came back a hundred-fold ;
 And for three hours he sobb'd o'er William's child
 Thinking of William.
 So those four abode
 Within one house together ; and as years
 Went forward, Mary took another mate ;
 But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

AUDLEY COURT.

' THE Bull, the Fleece are ciamm'd, and not a room
 For love or money. Let us picnic there
 At Audley Court '
 I spoke, while Audley feast
 Humm'd like a hive all round the narrow quay,
 To Francis, with a basket on his arm,
 To Francis just alighted from the boat,

And breathing of the sea. 'With all my heart,'
 Said Francis. Then we shoulder'd thro' the swarm,
 And rounded by the stillness of the beach
 To where the bay runs up its latest horn.
 We left the dying ebb that faintly lipp'd
 The flat red granite; so by many a sweep
 Of meadow smooth from aftermath we reach'd
 The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro' all
 The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,
 And cross'd the garden to the gardener's lodge,
 With all its casements bedded, and its walls
 And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.
 There, on a slope of orchard, Francis laid
 A damask napkin wrought with hoise and bound,
 Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of home,
 And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-made,
 Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret lay,
 Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks
 Imbedded and injellied; last, with these,
 A flask of cider from his father's vats,
 Prime, which I knew; and so we sat and eat
 And talk'd old matters over; who was dead,
 Who married, who was like to be, and how
 The races went, and who would rent the hall:
 Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce it was
 This season; glancing thence, discuss'd the farm,
 The four-field system, and the price of grain;
 And struck upon the corn-laws, where we split,
 And came again together on the king
 With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;
 And, while the blackbird on the pippin hung

To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and sang—
 'Oh! who would fight and march and countermarch,
 Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,
 And shovell'd up into some bloody trench
 Where no one knows? but let me live my life.
 'Oh! who would cast and balance at a desk,
 Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd stool,
 Till all his juice is dried, and all his joints
 Are full of chalk? but let me live my life.
 'Who'd seive the state? for if I carved my name
 Upon the cliffs that guard my native land,
 I might as well have traced it in the sands;
 The sea wastes all—but let me live my life.
 'Oh! who would love? I wou'd a woman once,
 But she was sharper than an eastern wind,
 And all my heart turn'd from her, as a thorn
 Turns from the sea; but let me live my life.'
 He sang his song, and I replied with mine:
 I found it in a volume, all of songs,
 Knock'd down to me, when old Sir Robert's pride,
 His books—the more the pity, so I said—
 Came to the hammer here in March—and this—
 I set the words, and added names I knew.
 'Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and dream of me:
 Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's arm,
 And sleeping, haply dream her arm is mine.
 'Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's arm;
 Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,
 For thou art fairer than all else that is.
 'Sleep, breathing health and peace upon her breast:
 Sleep, breathing love and trust against her lip:
 I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.
 'I go, but I return: I would I were
 The pilot of the darkness and the dream.

Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream of me.'

So sang we each to either, Francis Hale,

The farmer's son, who lived across the bay,

My friend; and I, that having where-withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life
A rolling stone of here and everywhere,
Did what I would; but ere the night we rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon, that, just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf
Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd
The limit of the hills; and as we sank
From rock to rock upon the glooming quay,

The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down

The bay was oily calm; the harbour-buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,
With one green sparkle ever and anon
Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart.

WALKING TO THE MAIL.

John. I'm glad I walk'd. How fresh the meadows look
Above the river, and, but a month ago,
The whole hill-side was redder than a fox.
Is yon plantation where this byway joins
The turnpike?

James. Yes.

John. And when does this come by?

James. The mail? At one o'clock.

John. What is it now?

James. A quarter to.

John. Whose house is that I see?
No, not the County Member's with the vane:

Up higher with the yew-tree by it, and half

A score of gables.

James. That? Sir Edward Head's:
But he's abroad: the place is to be sold.

John. Oh, his. He was not broken.

James. No, sir, he,
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his blood
That veil'd the world with jaundice, hid his face

From all men, and commencing with himself,

He lost the sense that handles daily life—
That keeps us all in order more or less—
And sick of home went overseas for change.

John. And whither?

James. Nay, who knows? he's here and there.

But let him go; his devil goes with him,
As well as with his tenant, Jocky Dawes.

John. What's that?

James. You saw the man—on Monday, was it?—

There by the humpback'd willow; half stands up

And bristles; half has fall'n and made a bridge;

And there he caught the younker tickling trout—

Caught *in flagrante*—what's the Latin word?—

Delicto: but his house, for so they say,
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that shook

The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt at doors,

And rummaged like a rat: no servant stay'd:

The farmer vext packs up his beds and chaus,

And all his household stuff; and with his boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the tilt,
Sets out, and meets a friend who hails him, 'What!

You're fitting!' 'Yes, we're fitting,' says the ghost

(For they had pack'd the thing among the beds,)

'Oh well,' says he, 'you fitting with us too—

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home again.'

John. He left his wife behind; for so I heard.

James. He left her, yes. I met my lady once :

A woman like a butt, and harsh as crabs.

John. Oh yet but I remember, ten years back—

'Tis now at least ten years—and then she was—

You could not light upon a sweeter thing :
A body slight and round, and like a pear
In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a foot
Lessening in perfect cadence, and a skin
As clean and white as pivet when it
flowers.

James. Ay, ay, the blossom fades, and they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat and dog.

She was the daughter of a cottage,
Out of her sphere. What betwixt shame
and pride,

New things and old, himself and her, she
sour'd

To what she is a nature never kind !
Like men, like manners : like breeds like,
they say :

Kind nature is the best : those manners
next

That fit us like a nature second-hand ;
Which are indeed the manners of the great.

John. But I had heard it was this bill
that past,

And fear of change at home, that drove
him hence.

James. That was the last drop in the
cup of gall.

I once was near him, when his bailiff
brought

A Chartist pike. You should have seen
him wince

As from a venomous thing : he thought
himself

A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a cry
Should break his sleep by night, and his
nice eyes

Should see the raw mechanic's bloody
thumbs

Sweat on his blazon'd chairs ; but, sir,
you know

That these two parties still divide the
world—

Of those that want, and those that have :
and still

The same old sore breaks out from age
to age

With much the same result. Now I
myself,

A Tory to the quick, was as a boy
Destructive, when I had not what I would
I was at school—a college in the South :
There lived a flayflint near ; we stole his
fruit,

His hens, his eggs ; but there was law
for us ;

We paid in person. He had a sow, sir.
She,

With meditative grunts of much content,
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and
mud.

By night we dragg'd her to the college
tower

From her warm bed, and up the cork-
screw stair

With hand and rope we haled the groan-
ing sow,

And on the leads we kept her till she
pigg'd.

Large range of prospect had the mother
sow,

And but for daily loss of one she loved
As one by one we took them—but for
this—

As never sow was higher in this world—
Might have been happy : but what lot is
pure ?

We took them all, till she was left alone
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.

John. They found you out ?

James. Not they.

John. Well—after all—
What know we of the secret of a man ?

His nerves were wrong. What ails us,
who are sound,

That we should mimic this raw fool the
world,

Which charts us all in its coarse blacks
or whites,

As ruthless as a baby with a worm,
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows

To Pity—more from ignorance than will.

But put your best foot forward, or I
fear
That we shall miss the mail · and here it
comes
With five at top : as quaint a four-in-hand
As you shall see—three pyebalds and a
roan.

EDWIN MORRIS;

OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the lake,
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of a
year,

My one Oasis in the dust and drouth
Of city life ! I was a sketcher then :

See here, my doing : curves of mountain,
bridge,

Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build, upon a
rock

With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock :
And here, new-comers in an ancient hold,
New-comers from the Mersey, million-
aires,

Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chimnied
bulk

Of mellow brickwork on an isle of bowers.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the lake
With Edwin Morris and with Edward
Bull

The curate ; he was fatter than his cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the
names,

Long learned names of agaric, moss and
fern,

Who forged a thousand theories of the
rocks,

Who taught me how to skate, to row, to
swim,

Who read me rhymes elaborately good,
His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he
seem'd

All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail

And once I ask'd him of his early life,
And his first passion ; and he answer'd
me ;

And well his words became him : was he
not

A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence
Stored from all flowers ? Poet-like he
spoke.

'My love for Nature is as old as I ;
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to that,
And three rich sennights more, my love
for her.

My love for Nature and my love for her,
Of different ages, like twin-sisters grew,
Twin-sisters differently beautiful.

To some full music rose and sank the sun,
And some full music seem'd to move and
change

With all the varied changes of the dark,
And either twilight and the day between ;
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again

Revolving toward fulfilment, made it
sweet

To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to
breathe.'

Or this or something like to this he
spoke.

Then said the fat-faced curate Edward
Bull,

'I take it, God made the woman for
the man,

And for the good and increase of the
world.

A pretty face is well, and this is well,
To have a dame indoors, that trims us up,
And keeps us tight ; but these unreal
ways

Seem but the theme of writers, and in-
deed

Worn threadbare. Man is made of solid
stuff.

I say, God made the woman for the man,
And for the good and increase of the
world.'

'Parson,' said I, 'you pitch the pipe
too low :

But I have sudden touches, and can run
My faith beyond my practice into his :

Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,
I scarce have other music : yet say on.

What should one give to light on such a dream ?'

I ask'd him half-sardonically.

'Give?

Give all thou art,' he answer'd, and a light

Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy cheek ;
'I would have hid her needle in my heart,

To save her little finger from a scratch
No deeper than the skin : my ears could hear

Her lightest breath ; her least remark
was worth

The experience of the wise. I went and came ;

Her voice fled always thro' the summer land ;

I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy days !

The flower of each, those moments when we met,

The crown of all, we met to part no more.'

Were not his words delicious, I a beast
To take them as I did ? but something jarr'd ;

Whether he spoke too largely ; that there seem'd

A touch of something false, some self-conceit,

Or over-smoothness : howsoe'er it was,
He scarcely hit my humour, and I said :

'Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone

Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,

As in the Latin song I learnt at school,
Sneeze out a full God-bless-you right and left ?

But you can talk : yours is a kindly vein :
I have, I think, — Heaven knows — as much within ;

Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,

That like a purple beech among the greens
Looks out of place : 'tis from no want in her :

It is my shyness, or my self-distrust,
Or something of a wayward modern mind
Dissecting passion. Time will set me right.'

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull :

'God made the woman for the use of man,

And for the good and increase of the world.'

And I and Edwin laughed ; and now we paused

About the windings of the marge to hear
The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms

And alders, garden-isles ; and now we left
The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran
By ripply shallows of the lispings lake,
Delighted with the freshness and the sound.

But, when the bracken rusted on their crags,

My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him

That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk,
The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.

'Tis true, we met ; one hour I had, no more :

She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,
The close, 'Your Letty, only yours ;' and this

Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran
My craft aground, and heard with beating heart

The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel ;

And out I stept, and up I crept : she moved,

Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers :

Then low and sweet I whistled thrice ;
and she,

She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore faith, I breathed

In some new planet: a silent cousin stole
Upon us and departed: 'Leave,' she
cried,

'O leave me!' 'Never, dearest, never:
here

I brave the worst:' and while we stood
like fools

Embracing, all at once a score of pugs
And poodles yell'd within, and out they
came

Trustees and Aunts and Uncles. 'What,
with him!

Go' (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus);
'him!'

I choked. Again they shriek'd the
burthen—'Him!'

Again with hands of wild rejection 'Go!—
G! , get you in!' She went—and in one
month

They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,
To lands in Kent and messuages in York,
And slight Sir Robert with his watery
smile

And educated whisker. But for me,
They set an ancient creditor to work.
It seems 'I broke a close with force and
arms:

There came a mystic token from the king
To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy!
I read, and fled by night, and flying
turn'd:

Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below:
I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the
storm;

So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen
Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to
hear

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long
ago

I have pardon'd little Letty; not indeed,
It may be, for her own dear sake but this,
She seems a part of those flesh days to me;
For in the dust and drouth of London life
She moves among my visions of the lake,
While the prime swallow dips his wing,
or then

While the gold-lily blows, and overhead
The light cloud smoulders on the summer
ciag

ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,
From scalp to sole one slough and crust
of sin,

Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce
meet

For troops of devils, mad with blasphemy,
I will not cease to grasp the hope I hold
Of saintdom, and to clamour, mourn and
sob,

Battering the gates of heaven with storms
of prayer,

Have mercy, Lord, and take away my sin.
Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty
God,

This not be all in vain, that thrice ten
years,

Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs,
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and cold,
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes
and cramps,

A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and
sleet, and snow;

And I had hoped that ere this period closed
Thou wouldst have caught me up into thy
rest,

Denying not these weather-beaten limbs
The meed of saints, the white robe and
the palm.

O take the meaning, Lord: I do not
breathe,

Not whisper, any murmur of complaint.
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold to this, were
still

Less burthen, by ten-hundred-fold, to bear,
Than were those lead-like tons of sin,
that crush'd

My spirit flat before thee.

O Lord, Lord,

Thou knowest I bore this better at the
first,

For I was strong and hale of body then;
And tho' my teeth, which now are dropt
away,

Would chatter with the cold, and all my
beard

Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the moon,
I drown'd the whoopings of the owl with
sound

Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-
times saw

An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.
Now am I feeble grown; my end draws
nigh;

I hope my end draws nigh: half deaf I am,
So that I scarce can hear the people hum
About the column's base, and almost blind,
And scarce can recognise the fields I
know;

And both my thighs are rotted with the
dew;

Yet cease I not to clamour and to cry,
While my stiff spine can hold my weary
head,

Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from the
stone,

Have mercy, mercy: take away my sin.
O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my soul,
Who may be saved? who is it may be
saved?

Who may be made a saint, if I fail here?
Show me the man hath suffer'd more
than I.

For did not all thy martyrs die one death?
For either they were stoned, or crucified,
Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or sawn
In twain beneath the ribs; but I die here
To-day, and whole years long, a life of
death.

Bear witness, if I could have found a way
(And heedfully I sifted all my thought)
More slowly-painful to subdue this home
Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and hate,
I had not stinted practice, O my God.

For not alone this pillar-punishment,
Not this alone I bore: but while I lived
In the white convent down the valley there,
For many weeks about my loins I wore
The robe that haled the buckets from the
well,

Twisted as tight as I could knot the noose;
And spake not of it to a single soul,
Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,
Betray'd my secret penance, so that all
My brethren marvel'd greatly. More
than this

I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest all.
Three winters, that my soul might
grow to thee,

I lived up there on yonder mountain
side.

My right leg chain'd into the crag, I lay
Pent in a roofless close of ragged stones;
Inswathed sometimes in wandering mist,
and twice

Black'd with thy branding thunder, and
sometimes

Sucking the damps for drink, and eating
not,

Except the spare chance-gift of those
that came

To touch my body and be heal'd, and live:
And they say then that I work'd miracles,
Whereof my fame is loud amongst man-
kind,

Cured lameness, palsies, cancers. Thou,
O God,

Knowest alone whether this was or no.

Have mercy, mercy! cover all my sin.

Then, that I might be more alone
with thee,

Three years I lived upon a pillar, high
Six cubits, and three years on one of
twelve;

And twice three years I crouch'd on one
that rose

Twenty by measure; last of all, I grew
Twice ten long weary weary years to this,
That numbers forty cubits from the soil.

I think that I have borne as much as
this—

Or else I dream—and for so long a time,
If I may measure time by yon slow light,
And this high dial, which my sorrow
crowns—

So much—even so.

And yet I know not well,
For that the evil ones come here, and say,
'Fall down, O Simeon: thou hast suffer'd
long

For ages and for ages!' then they prate
Of penances I cannot have gone thro',
Perplexing me with lies; and oft I fall,
Maybe for months, in such blind lethargies
That Heaven, and Earth, and Time are
choked.

But yet
 Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all
 the saints
 Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men on
 earth
 House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
 Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-
 some food,
 And wear warm clothes, and even beasts
 have stalls,
 I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the
 light,
 Bow down one thousand and two hundred
 times,
 To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the
 saints;
 Or in the night, after a little sleep,
 I wake: the chill stars sparkle; I am
 wet
 With drenching dews, or stiff with crack-
 ling frost
 I wear an undress'd goatskin on my
 back;
 A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;
 And in my weak, lean arms I lift the
 cross,
 And strive and wrestle with thee till I
 die:
 O mercy, mercy! wash away my sin.
 O Lord, thou knowest what a man I
 am;
 A sinful man, conceived and born in sin.
 'Tis their own doing; this is none of
 mine;
 Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for
 this,
 That here come those that worship me?
 Ha! ha!
 They think that I am somewhat. What
 am I?
 The silly people take me for a saint,
 And bring me offerings of fruit and
 flowers.
 And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness
 here)
 Have all in all endured as much, and
 more
 Than many just and holy men, whose
 names
 Are register'd and calendar'd for saints.

Good people, you do ill to kneel to me.
 What is it I can have done to merit this?
 I am a sinner viler than you all.
 It may be I have wrought some miracles,
 And cured some halt and maim'd; but
 what of that?
 It may be, no one, even among the saints,
 May match his pains with mine; but
 what of that?
 Yet do not rise; for you may look on me,
 And in your looking you may kneel to
 God.
 Speak! is there any of you halt or maim'd?
 I think you know I have some power
 with Heaven
 From my long penance: let him speak
 his wish.
 Yes, I can heal him. Power goes
 forth from me.
 They say that they are heal'd. Ah,
 hark! they shout
 'St. Simeon Stylites.' Why, if so,
 God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,
 God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,
 Can I work miracles and not be saved?
 This is not told of any. They were saints.
 It cannot be but that I shall be saved;
 Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,
 'Behold a saint!'
 And lower voices saint me from above.
 Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis
 Cracks into shining wings, and hope ere
 death
 Spreads more and more and more, that
 God hath now
 Sponged and made blank of crime's full
 record all
 My mortal archives.
 O my sons, my sons,
 I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname
 Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,
 The watcher on the column till the end,
 I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine
 bakes;
 I, whose bald brows in silent hours
 become
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
 From my high nest of penance here pro-
 claim
 That Pontius and Iscariot by my side

Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals
 I lay,
 A vessel full of sin : all hell beneath
 Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my
 sleeve,
 Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.
 I smote them with the cross ; they
 swarm'd again.
 In bed like monstrous apes they crush'd
 my chest :
 They flapp'd my light out as I read : I
 saw
 Their faces grow between me and my
 book ;
 With colt-like whinny and with hoggish
 whine
 They bust my playe. Yet this way
 was left,
 And by this way I 'scaped them. Mortify
 Your flesh, like me, with scourges and
 with thorns ;
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it may
 be, fast
 Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly, with
 slow steps,
 With slow, faint steps, and much exceed-
 ing pain,
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,
 that still
 Sing in mine ears. But yield not me the
 praise :
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought
 fit,
 Among the powers and princes of this
 world,
 To make me an example to mankind,
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not
 say
 But that a time may come—yea, even
 now,
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the thresh-
 old stairs
 Of life—I say, that time is at the doors
 When you may worship me without re-
 proach ;
 For I will leave my relics in your land,
 And you may carve a shrine about my
 dust,
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my
 bones,

When I am gather'd to the glorious
 saints.
 While I spake then, a sting of shrewd-
 est pain
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloudlike
 change,
 In passing, with a grosse film made thick
 These heavy, horny eyes. The end ! the
 end !
 Surely the end ! What's here ? a shape,
 a shade,
 A flash of light. Is that the angel there
 That holds a crown ? Come, blessed
 brother, come.
 I know thy glittering face. I waited
 long ;
 My brows are ready. What ! deny it
 now ?
 Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I
 clutch it. Christ !
 'Tis gone : 'tis here again ; the crown !
 the crown !
 So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,
 Sweet ! sweet ! spikenard, and balm, and
 frankincense.
 Ah ! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints
 I trust
 That I am whole, and clean, and meet
 for Heaven.
 Speak, if there be a priest, a man of
 God,
 Among you there, and let him presently
 Approach, and lean a ladder on the shaft,
 And climbing up into my airy home,
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament ;
 For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,
 I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
 A quarter before twelve.

But thou, O Lord,
 And all this foolish people ; let them take
 Example, pattern : lead them to thy light.

THE TALKING OAK.

*ONCE more the gate behind me falls ;
 Once more before my face
 I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
 That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,
Beneath its drift of smoke ;
And ah ! with what delighted eyes
I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
Ere that, which in me burn'd,
The love, that makes me thence a man,
Could hope itself return'd ;

To yonder oak within the field
I spoke without restraint,
And with a larger faith appeal'd
Than Papist unto Saint.

For oft I talk'd with him apart,
And told him of my choice,
Until he plagiarised a heart,
And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd under Heaven
None else could understand ;
I found him garrulously given,
A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
Is many a weary hour ;
'Twere well to question him, and try
If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roofs of Summer-place !

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
If ever maid or spouse,
As fair as my Olivia, came
To rest beneath thy boughs —

'O Walter, I have shelter'd here
Whatever maiden grace
The good old Summers, year by year
Made ripe in Summer-chace .

'Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
And, issuing shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
The girls upon the cheek,

'Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd bead, and shrift,
Bluff Harry broke into the spence
And turn'd the cowls adrift :

'And I have seen some score of those
Fresh faces, that would thrive
When his man-minded offset rose
To chase the deer at five ;

'And all that from the town would stroll,
Till that wild wind made work
In which the gloomy brewer's soul
Went by me, like a stork :

'The slight she-slips of loyal blood,
And others, passing praise,
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
For puritanic stays :

'And I have shadow'd many a group
Of beauties, that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
Or while the patch was worn ;

'And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modish Cupid of the day,
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

'I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall)
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all ;

'For those and theirs, by Nature's law,
Have faded long ago ;
But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

'From when she gamboll'd on the greens
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.

'I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me with thine ears,)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years—

'Yet, since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass
So slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass:

'For as to fairies, that will flit
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
But far too spare of flesh.'

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,
And overlook the chace;
And from thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,
That oft hast heard my vows,
Declare when last Olivia came
To sport beneath thy boughs.

'O yesterday, you know, the fan
Was holden at the town;
Her father left his good arm-chair,
And rode his hunter down.

'And with him Albert came on his
I look'd at him with joy:
As cowslip unto oxlip is,
So seems she to the boy

'An hour had past—and, sitting straight
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,
Her mother trundled to the gate
Behind the dappled grays.

'But as for her, she stay'd at home,
And on the roof she went,
And down the way you use to come,
She look'd with discontent.

'She left the novel half-uncut
Upon the rosewood shelf;
She left the new piano shut:
She could not please herself.

'Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,
And livelier than a lark
She sent her voice thro' all the holt
Before her, and the park.

'A light wind chased her on the wing,
And in the chase grew wild,
As close as might be would he cling
About the darling child:

'But light as any wind that blows
So fleetly did she stia,
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and rose,
And turn'd to look at her.

'And here she came, and round me play'd,
And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
About my "giant bole,"

'And in a fit of folio mirth
She strove to span my waist.
Alas, I was so broad of girth,
I could not be embraced.

'I wish'd myself the fair young beech
That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
She might have lock'd her hands.

'Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as sweet
As woodbine's fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried briony fold.'

O muffle round thy knees with fern,
And shadow Sumner-chace!
Long may thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place!

But tell me, did she read the name
I carved with many vows
When last with throbbing heart I came
To rest beneath thy boughs?

'O yes, she wander'd round and round
These knotted knees of mine,
And found, and kiss'd the name she found,
And sweetly murmur'd thine.

'A teardrop trembled from its source,
And down my surface crept.
My sense of touch is something coarse,
But I believe she wept.

'Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,
She glanced across the plain;
But not a creature was in sight:
She kiss'd me once again.

'Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hail'd wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stir'd:

'And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern'd,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn'd.

'Thrice-happy he that may caress
The ringlet's waving balm—
The cushions of whose touch may press
The maiden's tender palm.

'I, rooted here among the groves
But languidly adjust
My vapid vegetable loves
With antheis and with dust:

'For ah! my friend, the days were brief
Whereof the poets talk,
When that, which breathes within the leaf,
Could slip its bark and walk.

'But could I, as in times foregone,
From spray, and branch, and stem,
Have suck'd and gather'd into one
The life that spreads in them,

'She had not found me so remiss;
But lightly issuing thro',
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,
With usury thereto.'

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue thy loves among the bowers
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,
Old oak, I love thee well;
A thousand thanks for what I learn
And what remains to tell.

'Tis little more: the day was warm;
At last, tired out with play,
She sank her head upon her arm
And at my feet she lay.

'Her eyelids dropp'd their silken eaves.
I breathed upon her eyes
Thro' all the summer of my leaves
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

'I took the swarming sound of life—
The music from the town—
The murmurs of the drum and fife
And lull'd them in my own.

'Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye;
A second flutter'd round her lip
Like a golden butterfly;

'A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
From head to ankle fine,

'Then close and dark my arms I spread,
And shadow'd all her rest—
Dropt dew upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.

'But in a pet she started up,
And pluck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.

'And yet it was a graceful gift—
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.

'I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass
O kiss him once for me.

'O kiss him twice and thrice for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
Shall grow so fair as this.'

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
 Look further thro' the chace,
 Spread upward till thy boughs discern
 The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
 That but a moment lay
 Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
 Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
 The warmth it thence shall win
 To riper life may magnetise
 The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset,
 Or lapse from hand to hand,
 Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
 Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,
 Nor wielded axe disjoint,
 That art the fairest-spoken tree
 From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery-top
 All throats that gurgle sweet !
 All starry culmination drop
 Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !

All grass of silky feather grow—
 And while he sinks or swells
 The full south-breeze around thee blow
 The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
 That under deeply strikes !
 The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
 High up, in silver spikes !

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
 But, rolling as in sleep,
 Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
 That makes thee broad and deep !

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
 That only by thy side
 Will I to Olive plight my troth,
 And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,
 She, Dryad-like, shall wear
 Alternate leaf and acorn-ball
 In wreath about her hair

And I will work in prose and rhyme,
 And praise thee more in both
 Than bard has honour'd beech or lime,
 Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,
 And mystic sentence spoke ;
 And more than England honours that,
 Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abode
 Till all the paths were dim,
 And far below the Roundhead rode,
 And humm'd a sully hymn.

LOVE AND DUTY.

Of love that never found his earthly close,
 What sequel ? Streaming eyes and break-
 ing hearts ?

Or all the same as if he had not been ?
 Not so Shall Error in the round of
 time

Still father Truth ? O shall the braggart
 shout

For some blind glimpse of freedom work
 itself

Thio' madness, hated by the wise, to law
 System and empire ? Sin itself be found
 The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun ?
 And only he, this wonder, dead, become
 Mere highway dust ? or year by year alone
 Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
 Nightmare of youth, the spectre of him-
 self ?

If this were thus, if this, indeed, were
 all,

Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
 The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless
 days,

The long mechanic paces to and fro,
 The set gray life, and apathetic end.
 But am I not the noble thro' thy love ?
 O three times less unworthy ! likewise
 thou

Art more thro' Love, and greater than
thy years,
The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will
bring
The drooping flower of knowledge changed
to fruit

Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in
Time,
And that which shapes it to some perfect
end.

Will some one say, Then why not ill
for good?

Why took ye not your pastime? To that
man

My work shall answer, since I knew the
right

And did it; for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a man.

—So let me think 'tis well for thee and
me—

Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart
so slow

To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to me,
When eyes, love-languid thro' half tears
would dwell

One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,
Then not to dare to see! when thy low
voice,

Faltering, would break its syllables, to
keep

My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a
leash,

And not leap forth and fall about thy
neck,

And on thy bosom (deep desired relief!)
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that
weigh'd

Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!
For Love himself took part against
himself

To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love—
O this world's curse,—beloved but hated
—came

Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and
mine,

And crying, 'Who is this? behold thy
bride,'

She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard
To alien ears, I did not speak to these—
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me:
Hard is my doom and thine: thou
knowest it all.

Could Love part thus? was it not well
to speak,

To have spoken once? It could not but
be well.

The slow sweet hours that bring us all
things good,

The slow sad hours that bring us all
things ill,

And all good things from evil, brought
the night

In which we sat together and alone,
And to the want, that hollow'd all the
heart,

Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,
That burn'd upon its object thro' such
tears

As flow but once a life.

The trance gave way
To those caresses, when a hundred times
In that last kiss, which never was the last,
Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and
died.

Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the
words

That make a man feel strong in speaking
truth;

Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
The lights of sunset and of sunrise mix'd
In that brief night; the summer night,
that paused

Among her stars to hear us; stars that
hung

Love-charm'd to listen: all the wheels of
Time

Spun round in station, but the end had
come.

O then like those, who clench their
nerves to rush

Upon their dissolution, we two rose,
There—closing like an individual life—

In one blind cry of passion and of pain,
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,
Caught up the whole of love and utter'd
it,

And bade adieu for ever.

Live—yet live—
 Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing
 all
 Life needs for life is possible to will—
 Live happy ; tend thy flowers ; be tended
 by
 My blessing ! Should my Shadow cross
 thy thoughts
 Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
 For calmer hours to Memory's darkest
 hold,
 If not to be forgotten—not at once—
 Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy
 dreams,
 O might it come like one that looks con-
 tent,
 With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
 And point thee forward to a distant light,
 Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart
 And leave thee freer, till thou wake
 refresh'd
 Then when the first low matin-chirp hath
 grown
 Full quire, and morning driv'n her plow
 of pearl
 Far furrowing into light the mounded
 rack,
 Beyond the fair green field and eastern
 sea.

THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which
 Leonard wrote :
 It was last summer on a tour in Wales :
 Old James was with me : we that day
 had been
 Up Snowdon ; and I wish'd for Leonard
 there,
 And found him in Llanberis : then we
 crost
 Between the lakes, and clamber'd half
 way up
 The counter side ; and that same song of
 his
 He told me ; for I banter'd him, and
 swore
 They said he lived shut up within himself,
 A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,

That, setting the *how much* before the
how,
 Cry, like the daughters of the horseleech,
 ' Give,
 Cram us with all,' but count not me the
 herd !
 To which ' They call me what they
 will,' he said :
 ' But I was born too late : the fair new
 forms,
 That float about the threshold of an age,
 Like truths of Science waiting to be
 caught—
 Catch me who can, and make the catcher
 crown'd—
 Are taken by the forelock. Let it be,
 But if you care indeed to listen, hear
 These measured words, my work of
 yestermorn.
 ' We sleep and wake and sleep, but all
 things move ;
 The Sun flies forward to his brother Sun ;
 The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her
 ellipse ;
 And human things returning on them-
 selves
 Move onward, leading up the golden year.
 ' Ah, tho' the times, when some new
 thought can bud,
 Are but as poets' seasons when they
 flower,
 Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
 Have ebb and flow conditioning their
 march,
 And slow and sure comes up the golden
 year.
 ' When wealth no more shall rest in
 mounded heaps,
 But smit with freer light shall slowly
 melt
 In many streams to fatten lower lands,
 And light shall spread, and man be liker
 man
 Thro' all the season of the golden year.
 ' Shall eagles not be eagles ? wrens be
 wrens ?
 If all the world were falcons, what of
 that ?
 The wonder of the eagle were the less,
 But he not less the eagle. Happy days

Roll onward, leading up the golden year.
 'Fly, happy happy sails, and bear the
 Press ;

Fly happy with the mission of the Cross ;
 Knit land to land, and blowing haven-
 ward

With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear
 of toll,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

'But we grow old. Ah ! when shall
 all men's good

Be each man's rule, and universal Peace
 Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
 And like a lane of beams athwart the
 sea,

Thro' all the circle of the golden year ?'

Thus far he flow'd, and ended ; where-
 upon

'Ah, folly !' in mimic cadence answer'd
 James—

'Ah, folly ! for it lies so far away,
 Not in our time, nor in our children's
 time,

'Tis like the second world to us that live ;
 'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on
 Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year.'

With that he struck his staff against
 the rocks

And broke it,—James,—you know him,
 —old, but full

Of force and choler, and firm upon his
 feet,

And like an oaken stock in winter woods,
 O'erfLOURISH'd with the hoary clematis :
 Then added, all in heat :

'What stuff is this !

Old writers push'd the happy season
 back,—

The more fools they,—we forward :
 dreamers both :

You most, that in an age, when every
 hour

Must sweat her sixty minutes to the
 death,

Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman,
 rapt

Upon the teeming harvest, should not
 plunge

His hand into the bag : but well I know

That unto him who works, and feels he
 works,

This same grand year is ever at the
 doors.'

He spoke ; and, high above, I heard
 them blast

The steep slate-quarry, and the great
 echo flap

And buffet round the hills, from bluff to
 bluff.

ULYSSES.

IT little profits that an idle king,

By this still hearth, among these barren
 crags,

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and
 dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,

That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and
 know not me.

I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
 Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with
 those

That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and
 when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades

Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;

For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known ; cities of
 men

And manners, climates, councils, govern-
 ments,

Myself not least, but honour'd of them
 all ;

And drunk delight of battle with my
 peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy
 Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met ;

Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose
 margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled
 on life

Were all too little, and of one to me

Little remains : but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something
more,

A binger of new things ; and vile it
were

For some three suns to stoie and hoard
myself,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human
thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make
mild

A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the
sphere

Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work,
I mine.

There lies the port ; the vessel puffs
her sail :

There gloom the dark broad seas. My
mariners,

Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and
thought with me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and
opposed

Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I
are old ;

Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the
end,

Some work of noble note, may yet be
done,

Not unbecoming men that strove with
Gods.

The lights begin to twinkle from the
'rocks :

The long day wanes : the slow moon
climbs : the deep

Moans round with many voices. Come,
my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.

Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose
holds

To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us
down :

It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we
knew.

Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and
tho'

We are not now that strength which in
old days

Moved earth and heaven ; that which we
are, we are ;

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong
in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and
fall,

The vapours weep their burthen to the
ground,

Man comes and tills the field and lies
beneath,

And after many a summer dies the swan.
Me only cruel immortality

Consumes . I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,

A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a
dream

The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of
morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a
man—

So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he
seem'd

To his great heart none other than a God !
I ask'd thee, ' Give me immortality.'

Then didst thou grant mine asking with
a smile,

Like wealthy men who care not how they
give.

But thy strong Hours indignant work'd
their wills,
And beat me down and mar'd and wasted
me,
And tho' they could not end me, left me
maim'd

To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill
with tears

To hear me? Let me go : take back thy
gift :

Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet
for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ; there
comes

A glimpse of that dark world where I
was born.

Once more the old mysterious glimmer
steals

From thy pure brows, and from thy
shoulders pure,

And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the
gloom,

Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to
mine,

Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild
team

Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke,
arise,

And shake the darkness from their
loosen'd manes,

And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer
given

Departest, and thy tears are on my
cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy
tears,

And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,

In days far-off, on that dark earth, be
true ?

' The Gods themselves cannot recall their
gifts.'

Ay me ! ay me ! with what another
heart

In days far-off, and with what other eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that watch'd—

The lucid outline forming round thee ;
saw

The dim curls kindle into sunny rings ;
Changed with thy mystic change, and
felt my blood

Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd
all

Thy presence and thy portals, while I
lay,

Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-
warm

With kisses balmier than half-opening
buds

Of April, and could hear the lips that
kiss'd

Whispering I knew not what of wild and
sweet,

Like that strange song I heard Apollo
sing,

While I lion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East .
How can my nature longer mix with
thine ?

Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled
feet

Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when
the steam

Floats up from those dim fields about the
homes

Of happy men that have the power to
die,

And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
Release me, and restore me to the ground ;

Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my
grave :

Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by
morn ;

I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn :
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall ;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time ;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ;
 When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed :

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ;
 Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ;
 In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;
 In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
 And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, ' My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
 Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee.'

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,
 As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
 All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, ' I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ;'
 Saying, ' Dost thou love me, cousin ?' weeping, ' I have loved thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;
 Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;
 Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !
O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ?—having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this ? his eyes are heavy : think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him : it is thy duty : kiss him : take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought :
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand !

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth !
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth !

Cursed be the sickly forms that en from honest Nature's rule !
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool !

Well—'tis well that I should bluster !—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit ?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort ? in division of the records of the mind ?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind ?

I remember one that perish'd : sweetly did she speak and move .
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore ?
No—she never loved me truly : love is love for evermore.

Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears ;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow : get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace ; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine ; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his : it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd'—Perish in thy self-contempt !

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy ! wherefore should I care ?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these ?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy : what is that which I should do ?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Undereath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint.
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-stair'd ;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to bust all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breathths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustious woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing space ;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry ;
I hung with grooms and porters on the
bridge,
To watch the three tall spires ; and there
I shaped*

The city's ancient legend into this —

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the
people well,

And loathed to see them overtax'd ; but
she

Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
In Coventry : for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers
brought

Their children, clamouring, ' If we pay,
we starve ! '

She sought her lord, and found him, where
he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his hair

A yard behind. She told him of their
tears,

And pray'd him, ' If they pay this tax,
they starve. '

Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,
' You would not let your little finger ache
For such as these ? '— ' But I would die, '
said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by
Paul :

Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear ;
' Oh ay, ay, ay, you talk ! '— ' Alas ! ' she
said,

' But prove me what it is I would not do. '
And from a heart as rough as Esau's hand,
He answer'd, ' Ride you naked thro' the
town,

And I repeal it ; ' and nodding, as in scorn,
He pated, with great strides among his
dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from all the compass shift and
blow,

Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet,
all

The hard condition ; but that she would
loose

The people : therefore, as they loved her
well,

From then till noon no foot should pace
the street,

No eye look down, she passing ; but that all
Should keep within, door shut, and
window barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower,
and there

Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,
The grim Eail's gift ; but ever at a breath
She linger'd, looking like a summer moon
Half-dipt in cloud : anon she shook her
head,

And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her
knee ;

Unclad heiself in haste ; adown the stair
Stole on ; and, like a cieeping sunbeam,
slid

From pillai unto pillai, until she reach'd
The gateway ; there she found her palfrey
trapt

In purple blazon'd with aïmorial gold.

Then she rode foith, clothed on with
chastity :

The deep air listen'd round her as she rode,
And all the low wind hardly breathed for
fear.

The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the
spout

Had cunning eyes to see : the barking cur
Made her cheek flame : her palfrey's foot-
fall shot

Light horrors thro' her pulses : the blind
walls

Were full of chinks and holes ; and
overhead

Fantastic gables, crowding, stared : but she
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she saw
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the
field

Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the
wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with
chastity :

And one low churl, compact of thankless
earth,

The fatal byword of all yeas to come,

Boring a little auger-hole in fear,
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head,
And dropt before him. So the Powers,
who wait

On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused ;
And she, that knew not, pass'd : and all
at once,

With twelve great shocks of sound, the
shameless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred
towers,

One after one : but even then she gain'd
Her bower ; whence reissuing, iobed and
crown'd,

To meet her lord, she took the tax away
And built herself an everlasting name—

THE DAY-DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :

A pleasant hour has passed away
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
The dewy sister-eyelids lay.

As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro' many wayward moods

To see you dreaming—and, behind,
A summer crisp with shining woods.

And I too dream'd, until at last

Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past,

And loosely settled into form.

And would you have the thought I had,
And see the vision that I saw,

Then take the broidery-frame, and add
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,

And I will tell it. Turn your face,

Not look with that too-earnest eye—
The rhymes are dazzled from their place,

And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy plans,

Here rests the sap within the leaf,
 Here stays the blood along the veins.
 Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
 Faint murmurs from the meadows
 come,
 Like hints and echoes of the world
 To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
 On every slanting terrace-lawn.
 The fountain to his place returns
 Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
 Here droops the banner on the tower,
 On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
 The peacock in his laurel bowel,
 The parrot in his gilded wues.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs :
 In these, in those the life is stay'd.
 The mantles from the golden pegs
 Droop sleepily : no sound is made,
 Not even of a gnat that sings.
 More like a picture seemeth all
 Than those old portraits of old kings,
 That watch the sleepers from the wall.

IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd ; and
 there
 The wrinkled steward at his task,
 The maid-of-honour blooming fair ;
 The page has caught her hand in his .
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak :
 His own are pouted to a kiss :
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
 Make prisms in every carven glass,
 And beaker brimm'd with noble wine.
 Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
 His state the king reposing keeps.
 He must have been a jovial king.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
 At distance like a little wood ;
 Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
 And grapes with bunches red as blood ;
 All creeping plants, a wall of green
 Close-matted, bur and brake and briar,
 And glimpsing over these, just seen,
 High up, the topmost palace spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
 And thought and time be born again,
 And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
 Bring truth that sways the soul of men ?
 Here all things in their place remain,
 As all were order'd, ages since.
 Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,
 And bring the fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
 She lying on her couch alone,
 Across the purple coverlet,
 The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
 On either side her tranced form
 Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :
 The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
 And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broder'd coverlid
 Unto her limbs itself doth mould
 Languidly ever ; and, amid
 Her full black ringlets downward
 roll'd,
 Glows forth each softly-shadow'd arm
 With bracelets of the diamond bight :
 Her constant beauty doth inform
 Stillness with love, and day with light

III.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard
 In palace chambers far apart.
 The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
 That lie upon her charmed heart.

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
 And round her waist she felt it fold,
 And far across the hills they went
 In that new world which is the old :
 Across the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 And deep into the dying day
 The happy princess follow'd him.

II.

'I'd sleep another hundred years,
 O love, for such another kiss ;'
 'O wake for ever, love,' she heais,
 'O love, 'twas such as this and this '
 And o'er them many a sliding star,
 And many a meriy wind was borne,
 And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
 The twilight melted into morn.

III.

'O eyes long laid in happy sleep '
 'O happy sleep, that lightly fled !'
 'O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep '
 'O love, thy kiss would wake the dead !'
 And o'er them many a flowing range
 Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,
 And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
 The twilight died into the dark.

IV.

'A hundred summers ! can it be ?
 And whither goest thou, tell me where ?'
 'O seek my father's court with me,
 For there are greater wonders there '
 And o'er the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
 Beyond the night, across the day,
 Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

MORAL.

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
 And if you find no moral there,
 Go, look in any glass and say,
 What moral is in being fair.

Oh, to what uses shall we put
 The wildweed-flower that simply blows ?
 And is there any moral shut
 Within the bosom of the rose ?

II.

But any man that walks the mead,
 In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
 According as his humours lead,
 A meaning suited to his mind.
 And liberal applications lie
 In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;
 So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
 Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

You shake your head. A random string
 Your finer female sense offends.
 Well—were it not a pleasant thing
 To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
 To pass with all our social ties
 To silence from the paths of men ;
 And every hundred years to rise
 And learn the world, and sleep again ;
 To sleep thro' terms of mighty wais,
 And wake on science grown to more,
 On secrets of the brain, the stars,
 As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
 And all that else the years will show,
 The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
 The vast Republics that may grow,
 The Federations and the Powers ;
 Titanic forces taking birth
 In divers seasons, divers climes ;
 For we are Ancients of the earth,
 And in the morning of the times.

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
 Thro' sunny decads new and strange,
 Or gay quinquennials would we reap
 The flower and quintessence of change.

III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !
 So much your eyes my fancy take—
 Be still the first to leap to light
 That I might kiss those eyes awake !

For, am I right, or am I wrong,
 To choose your own you did not care ;
 You'd have *my* moral from the song,
 And I will take my pleasure there :
 And, am I right or am I wrong,
 My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
 To search a meaning for the song,
 Perforce will still revert to you ;
 Nor finds a closer truth than this
 All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
 And evermore a costly kiss
 The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

For since the time when Adam first
 Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
 And every bird of Eden burst
 In carol, every bud to flower,
 What eyes, like thine, have waken'd
 hopes,
 What lips, like thine, so sweetly
 join'd ?
 Where on the double rosebud droops
 The fulness of the pensive mind ;
 Which all too dearly self-involved,
 Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me ;
 A sleep by kisses undissolved,
 That lets thee neither hear nor see :
 But break it. In the name of wife,
 And in the rights that name may
 give,
 Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
 And that for which I came to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
 And, if you find a meaning there,
 O whisper to your glass, and say,
 'What wonder, if he thinks me fair ?'
 What wonder I was all unwise,
 To shape the song for your delight
 Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise
 That float thro' Heaven, and cannot
 light ?
 Or old-world trains, upheld at court
 By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
 But take it—earnest wed with sport,
 And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
 But it is wild and barren,
 A garden too with scarce a tree,
 And waster than a warren :
 Yet say the neighbours when they call,
 It is not bad but good land,
 And in it is the germ of all
 That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
 In days of old Amphion,
 And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
 Nor cared for seed or scion !
 And had I lived when song was great,
 And legs of trees were limber,
 And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
 And fiddled in the timber !

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,
 Such happy intonation,
 Wherever he sat down and sung
 He left a small plantation ;
 Wherever in a lonely grove
 He set up his forlorn pipes,
 The gouty oak began to move,
 And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stir'd its bushy crown,
 And, as tradition teaches,
 Young ashes pirouetted down
 Coquetting with young beeches ;
 And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
 Ran forward to his rhyming,
 And from the valleys underneath
 Came little cosses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent
 The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
 And down the middle, buzz ! she went
 With all her bees behind her :
 The poplars, in long order due,
 With cypress promenaded,
 The shock-head willows two and two
 By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shod alder from the wave,
 Came yews, a dismal coterie ;
 Each pluck'd his one foot from the grave,
 Poussetting with a sloe-tree :

Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating resin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
The country-side descended ;
And shepherds from the mountain-eaves
Look'd down, half-pleased, half-fright-
en'd,
As dash'd about the drunken leaves
The random sunshine lighten'd !

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,
And wanton without measure ;
So youthful and so flexible then,
—You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle ! shake the
twigs !

And make her dance attendance ;
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,
And scutinous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain ! in such a brassy age
I could not move a thistle ;
The very sparrows in the hedge
Scarce answer to my whistle ;
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick
With strumming and with scraping,
A jackass heehaws from the ick,
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear ? a sound
Like sleepy counsel pleading ;
O Lord !—'tis in my neighbour's ground,
The modern Muses reading.
They read Botanic Treatises,
And Works on Gardening thro' there,
And Methods of transplanting trees
To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses ! how they prose
O'er books of travell'd seamen,
And show you slips of all that grows
From England to Van Diemen.
They read in arbours clipt and cut,
And alleys, faded places,
By squares of tropic summer shut
And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dnt,
Are neither green nor sappy ;
Half-conscious of the garden-squint,
The spindlings look unhappy.
Better to me the meanest weed
That blows upon its mountain,
The vilest herb that runs to seed
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,
And years of cultivation,
Upon my proper patch of soil
To grow my own plantation
I'll take the showers as they fall,
I will not vex my bosom :
Enough if at the end of all
A little garden blossom.

ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon :
My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
May my soul follow soon !
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord :
Make Thou my spirit pure and clean
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground ;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round ;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee ;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doois ;
The flashes come and go ;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strows her lights below,

And deepens on and up ! the gates
 Roll back, and far within
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
 A light upon the shining sea—
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel :
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall !
 For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall :
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :

I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims,
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns :
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
 I hear a voice but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chaunts resound between

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.
 A gentle sound, an awful light !
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,
 The cock crows ere the Christmas
 morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand and
 mail ;
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
 No brachy thicket shelter yields ;
 But blessed foams in whistling storms
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear ;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.
 I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armour that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heat and
 eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copes nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
 ' O just and faithful knight of God !
 Ride on ! the prize is near.'

So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
'And have you lost your heart?' she said ;
'And are you married yet, Edward
Gray?'

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
'Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

'Ellen Adair she loved me well,
Against her father's and mother's will :
To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

'Shy she was, and I thought her cold ,
Thought her proud, and fled over thesea ;
Fill'd I was with folly and spite,
When 'Ellen Adair was dying for me.

'Cruel, cruel the words I said !
Cruelly came they back to-day :
'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,
"To trouble the heart of Edward Gray "

'There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper'd, "Listen to my despair :
I repent me of all I did :
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !"

'Then I took a pencil, and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;
And here the heart of Edward Gray !"

'Love may come, and love may go,
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree ;
But I will love no more, no more,
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

'Bitterly wept I over the stone :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away .
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !
And there the heart of Edward Gray !'

WILL WATERPROOF'S
LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,
To which I most resort,
How goes the time ? 'Tis five o'clock.
Go fetch a pint of port :
But let it not be such as that
You set before chance-comers,
But such whose father-grape grew fat
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,
But may she still be kind,
And whisper lovely words, and use
Her influence on the mind,
To make me write my random rhymes,
Ere they be half-forgotten ;
Nor add and alter, many times,
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
Her laurel in the wine,
And lays it thrice upon my lips,
These favour'd lips of mine ;
Until the charm have power to make
New lifeblood warm the bosom,
And barren commonplaces break
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble ;
And that child's heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,
By many pleasant ways,
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days .
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;
The gas-light wavers dimmer ;
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
 Unboding critic-pen,
 Or that eternal want of pence,
 Which vexes public men,
 Who hold their hands to all, and cry
 For that which all deny them—
 Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
 And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
 Tho' fortune clip my wings,
 I will not cramp my heart, nor take
 Half-views of men and things.
 Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;
 There must be stormy weather ;
 But for some true result of good
 All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;
 If old things, there are new ;
 Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,
 Yet glimpses of the true.
 Let ruffs be rife in prose and rhyme,
 We lack not rhymes and reasons,
 As on this whirligig of Time
 We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid ;
 With fair horizons bound :
 This whole wide earth of light and shade
 Comes out a perfect round.
 High over roaring Temple-bar,
 And set in Heaven's third story,
 I look at all things as they are,
 But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honour'd by the guest
 Half-mused, or reeling ripe,
 The pint, you brought me, was the best
 That ever came from pipe.
 But tho' the port surpasses praise,
 My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
 Is there some magic in the place ?
 Or do my peptics differ ?

For since I came to live and learn,
 No pint of white or red
 Had ever half the power to turn
 This wheel within my head,

Which bears a season'd brain about,
 Unsubject to confusion,
 Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,
 Tho' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,
 With many kinsmen gay,
 Where long and largely we carouse
 As who shall say me nay :
 Each month, a birth-day coming on,
 We drink defying trouble,
 Or sometimes two would meet in one,
 And then we drank it double ;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
 Had relish fiery-new,
 Or elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
 As old as Waterloo ;
 Or stow'd, when classic Canning died,
 In musty bins and chambers,
 Had cast upon its crusty side
 The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !
 She answer'd to my call,
 She changes with that mood or this,
 Is all-in-all to all :
 She lit the spark within my throat,
 To make my blood run quicker,
 Used all her fiery will, and smote
 Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
 The waiter's hands, that reach
 To each his perfect pint of stout,
 His proper chop to each.
 He looks not like the common breed
 That with the napkin dally ;
 I think he came like Ganymede,
 From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
 Than modern poultry drop,
 Stept forward on a firmer leg,
 And cramm'd a plumper crop ;
 Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
 Crow'd lustier late and early,
 Sipt wine from silver, praising God,
 And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
 Till in a court he saw
 A something-pottle-bodied boy
 That knuckled at the taw :
 He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and
 good,
 Flew over roof and casement :
 His brothers of the weather stood
 Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and spie,
 And follow'd with acclams,
 A sign to many a staring shire
 Came crowing over Thames.
 Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
 Till, where the street grows straiter,
 One fix'd for ever at the door,
 And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?
 How out of place she makes
 The violet of a legend blow
 Among the chops and steaks !
 'Tis but a steward of the can,
 One shade more plump than common ;
 As just and mere a serving-man
 As any born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me down
 Into the common day ?
 Is it the weight of that half-crown,
 Which I shall have to pay ?
 For, something duller than at first,
 Nor wholly comfortable,
 I sit, my empty glass reversed,
 And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife,
 I take myself to task ;
 Lest of the fulness of my life
 I leave an empty flask :
 For I had hope, by something rare
 To prove myself a poet :
 But, while I plan and plan, my han
 Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
 Till they be gather'd up ;
 The truth, that flies the flowing can,
 Will haunt the vacant cup :

And others' follies teach us not,
 Nor much their wisdom teaches ;
 And most, of sterling worth, is what
 Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !
 We know not what we know.
 But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone ;
 'Tis gone, and let it go.
 'Tis gone : a thousand such have slipt
 Away from my embraces,
 And fall'n into the dusty crypt
 Of daiken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou ! thy betters went
 Long since, and came no more ;
 With peals of genial clamour sent
 From many a tavern-doo,
 With twisted quirks and happy hits,
 From misty men of letters ;
 The tavern-hours of mighty wits—
 Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and looks
 Had yet their native glow :
 Nor yet the fear of little books
 Had made him talk for show ;
 But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,
 He flash'd his random speeches,
 Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
 His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,
 Like all good things on earth !
 For should I prize thee, couldst thou
 last,
 At half thy real worth ?
 I hold it good, good things should pass :
 With time I will not quarrel :
 It is but yonder empty glass
 That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
 To which I most resort,
 I too must part : I hold thee dear
 For this good pint of port.
 For this, thou shalt from all things suck
 Marrow of mirth and laughter ;
 And wheresoe'er thou move, good luck
 Shall fling her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
 The sphere thy fate allots :
 Thy latter days increased with pence
 Go down among the pets :
 Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
 In haunts of hungry sinners,
 Old boxes, larded with the steam
 Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our skins,
 Would quarrel with our lot ;
 Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
 To serve the hot-and-hot ;
 To come and go, and come again,
 Returning like the pewit,
 And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
 That trifle with the culet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
 The thick-set hazel dies ;
 Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
 The corners of thine eyes :
 Live long, nor feel in head or chest
 Our changeful equinoxes,
 Till mellow Death, like some late guest,
 Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease
 To pace the gritted floor,
 And, laying down an unctuous lease
 Of life, shalt earn no more ;
 No carved cross-bones, the types of Death,
 Shall show thee past to Heaven :
 But carved cross-pipes, and, underneath,
 A pint-pot neatly graven.

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,
 And clouds are highest up in air,
 Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
 To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :
 Lovers long-betroth'd were they :
 They too will wed the morrow morn :
 God's blessing on the day !

'He does not love me for my birth,
 Nor for my lands so broad and fair ;
 He loves me for my own true worth,
 And that is well,' said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
 Said, 'Who was this that went from
 thee ?'

'It was my cousin,' said Lady Clare,
 'To-morrow he weds with me.'

'O God be thank'd !' said Alice the
 nurse,

'That all comes round so just and fair :
 Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
 And you are *not* the Lady Clare.'

'Are ye out of your mind, my nurse,
 my nurse ?'

Said Lady Clare, 'that ye speak so
 wild ?'

'As God's above,' said Alice the nurse,
 'I speak the truth : you are my child.'

'The old Earl's daughter died at my
 breast ;

I speak the truth, as I live by bread !
 I buried her like my own sweet child,
 And put my child in her stead.'

'Falsely, falsely have ye done,
 O mother,' she said, 'if this be true,
 To keep the best man under the sun
 So many years from his due.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the
 nurse,

'But keep the secret for your life,
 And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
 When you are man and wife.'

'If I'm a beggar born,' she said,
 'I will speak out, for I dare not lie
 Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,
 And fling the diamond necklace by.'

'Nay now, my child,' said Alice the
 nurse,

'But keep the secret all ye can.'
 She said, 'Not so : but I will know
 If there be any faith in man.'

'Nay now, what faith ?' said Alice the
 nurse,

'The man will cleave unto his right.'
 'And he shall have it,' the lady replied,
 'Tho' I should die to-night.'

'Yet givè one kiss to youi mother dear !
'Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee.'
'O mother, mother, mother,' she said,
'So stange it seems to me.

'Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go.'

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare :
She went by dale, and she went by down,
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had
brought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower :
'O Lady Clare, you shame youi worth !
Why come you drest like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth ?'

'If I come diest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are :
I am a beggar born,' she said,
'And not the Lady Clare.'

'Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'For I am yours in word and in deed.
Play me no tricks,' said Lord Ronald,
'Your riddle is hard to read.'

O and proudly stood she up !
Her heart within her did not fail :
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn :
He turn'd and kiss'd her where she
stood :

'If you are not the heiress born,
And I,' said he, 'the next in blood—

'If you are not the heiress born,
And I,' said he, 'the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare.'

THE CAPTAIN.

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

HE that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wiong.
Deep as Hell I count his error.
Let him hear my song.
Brave the Captain was : the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Sailors bold and true.
But they hated his oppression,
Stern he was and rash ;
So for every light transgression'
Doom'd them to the lash.
Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seem'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Wheresoe'er he came.
So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbour-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.
On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,
In the north, her canvas flowing,
Rose a ship of France.
Then the Captain's colour heighten'd,
Joyful came his speech :
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
In the eyes of each.
'Chase,' he said : the ship flew for-
ward,
And the wind did blow ;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she near'd the foe.
Then they look'd at him they hated,
Had what they desired :
Mute with folded arms they waited—
Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the foeman's thundei
Roaring out their doom ;
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom,

Spars were splinter'd, decks were shatter'd,
 Bullets fell like rain ;
 Over mast and deck were scatter'd
 Blood and brains of men.
 Spars were splinter'd ; decks were broken :
 Every mother's son—
 Down they dropt—no word was spoken—
 Each beside his gun.
 On the decks as they were lying,
 Were their faces grim.
 In their blood, as they lay dying,
 Did they smile on him.
 Those, in whom he had reliance
 For his noble name,
 With one smile of still defiance
 Sold him unto shame.
 Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
 Pale he turn'd and red,
 Till himself was deadly wounded
 Falling on the dead.
 Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !
 Years have wander'd by,
 Side by side beneath the water
 Crew and Captain lie ;
 There the sunlit ocean tosses
 O'er them mouldering,
 And the lonely seabird crosses
 With one waft of the wing.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

IN her ear he whispers gaily,
 'If my heart by signs can tell,
 Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
 And I think thou lov'st me well.'
 She replies, in accents fainter,
 'There is none I love like thee.'
 He is but a landscape-painter,
 And a village maiden she.
 He to lips, that fondly falter,
 Presses his without reproof :
 Leads her to the village altar,
 And they leave her father's roof.
 'I can make no marriage present :
 Little can I give my wife.
 Love will make our cottage pleasant,
 And I love thee more than life.'
 They by parks and lodges going
 See the lordly castles stand :

Summer woods, about them blowing,
 Made a murmur in the land.
 From deep thought himself he rouses,
 Says to her that loves him well,
 'Let us see these handsome houses
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell.'
 So she goes by him attended,
 Hears him lovingly converse,
 Sees whatever fair and splendid
 Lay betwixt his home and hers ;
 Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
 Parks and order'd gardens great,
 Ancient homes of lord and lady,
 Built for pleasure and for state.
 All he shows her makes him dearer .
 Evermore she seems to gaze
 On that cottage growing nearer,
 Where they twain will spend their days.
 O but she will love him truly !
 He shall have a cheerful home ;
 She will order all things duly,
 When beneath his roof they come.
 Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
 Till a gateway she discerns
 With armorial bearings stately,
 And beneath the gate she turns ;
 Sees a mansion more majestic
 Than all those she saw before :
 Many a gallant gay domestic
 Bows before him at the door.
 And they speak in gentle murmur,
 When they answer to his call,
 While he treads with footstep firmer,
 Leading on from hall to hall.
 And, while now she wonders blindly,
 Nor the meaning can divine,
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,
 'All of this is mine and thine.'
 Here he lives in state and bounty,
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
 Not a lord in all the county
 Is so great a lord as he.
 All at once the colour flushes
 Her sweet face from brow to chin .
 As it were with shame she blushes,
 And her spirit changed within.
 Then her countenance all over
 Pale again as death did prove .
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.

So she strove against her weakness,
 Tho' at times her spirit sank :
 Shaped her heart with woman's meekness
 To all duties of her rank :
 And a gentle consort made he,
 And her gentle mind was such
 That she grew a noble lady,
 And the people loved her much.
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,
 With the burthen of an honour
 Unto which she was not born.
 Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
 And she murmur'd, 'Oh, that he
 Were once more that landscape-painter,
 Which did win my heart from me !'
 So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
 Fading slowly from his side :
 Three fair children first she bore him,
 Then before her time she died.
 Weeping, weeping late and early,
 Walking up and pacing down,
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
 And he came to look upon her,
 And he look'd at her and said,
 'Bring the dress and put it on her,
 That she wore when she was wed.'
 Then her people, softly treading,
 Bore to earth her body, drest
 In the dress that she was wed in,
 That her spirit might have rest.

THE VOYAGE.

I.

We left behind the painted buoy
 That tosses at the harbour-mouth ;
 And madly danced our hearts with joy,
 As fast we fled to the South :
 How fresh was every sight and sound
 On open main or winding shore !
 We knew the merry world was round,
 And we might sail for evermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze 'against the
 bow,
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail .

The Lady's-head upon the prow
 Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the
 gale.

The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
 And swept behind ; so quick the run,
 We felt the good ship shake and reel,
 We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
 And burn the threshold of the night,
 Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
 And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !
 How oft the purple-skirted robe
 Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
 As thro' the slumber of the globe
 Again we dash'd into the dawn !

IV.

New stars all night above the brim
 Of waters lighten'd into view ;
 They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
 Changed every moment as we flew.
 Far ran the naked moon across
 The houseless ocean's heaving field,
 Or flying shone, the silver boss
 Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
 High towns on hills were dimly seen,
 We past long lines of Northern capes
 And dewy Northern meadows green.
 We came to warmer waves, and deep
 Across the boundless east we drove,
 Where those long swells of breaker sweep
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
 brine
 With ashy rains, that spreading made
 Fantastic plume or sable pine ;
 By sands and steaming flats, and floods
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
 And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
 Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;
 At times a carven craft would shoot
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
 But we not paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
 Down the waste waters day and night,
 And still we follow'd where she led,
 In hope to gain upon her flight.
 Her face was evermore unseen,
 And fixt upon the far sea-line ;
 But each man murmur'd, 'O my Queen,
 I follow till I make thee mine.'

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
 Like Fancy made of golden air,
 Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
 Now high on waves that idly burst
 Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the
 sea,
 And now, the bloodless point reversed,
 She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us—him
 We pleased not—he was seldom
 pleased :
 He saw not far : his eyes were dim :
 But ours he swore were all diseased.
 'A ship of fools,' he shriek'd in spite,
 'A ship of fools,' he sneer'd and
 wept.
 And overboard one stormy night
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was foul'd,
 Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;
 We lov'd the glories of the world,
 But laws of nature were our scorn.

For blasts would rise and rave and cease,
 But whence were those that drove the
 sail
 Across the whulwind's heart of peace,
 And to and thro' the counter gale ?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
 For still we follow'd where she led .
 Now mate is blind and captain lame,
 And half the crew are sick or dead,
 But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
 We follow that which flies before :
 We know the merry world is round,
 And we may sail for evermore.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND
QUEEN GUINEVERE.

A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,
 With tears and smiles from heaven again
 The maiden Spring upon the plain
 Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.
 In crystal vapour everywhere
 Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
 And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
 The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song :
 Sometimes the throstle whistled strong :
 Sometimes the sparrow, wheel'd along,
 Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong :
 By grassy capes with fuller sound
 In curves the yellowing river ran,
 And drooping chestnut-buds began
 To spread into the perfect fan,
 Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
 Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
 Rode thro' the covets of the deer,
 With blissful treble ringing clear.
 She seem'd a part of joyous Spring :
 A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
 Buckled with golden clasps before ;
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
 Now by some tinkling rivulet,
 In mosses mixt with violet
 Her cream-white mule his pastern set :
 And fleetier now she skimm'd the
 plains

Than she whose elfin prancer springs
 By night to eery warblings,
 When all the glimmering moorland rings
 With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
 The happy winds upon her play'd,
 Blowing the ringlet from the braid :
 She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
 The rein with dainty finger-tips,
 A man had given all other bliss,
 And all his worldly worth for this,
 To waste his whole heart in one kiss
 Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
 Thy tribute wave deliver :
 No more by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
 A rivulet then a river .
 No where by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
 And here thine aspen sliver ;
 And here by thee will hum the bee,
 For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
 A thousand moons will quiver ;
 But not by thee my steps shall be,
 For ever and for ever.

THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;
 She was more fair than words can say :
 Bare-footed came the beggar maid
 Before the king Cophetua.

In robe and crown the king stepped down,
 To meet and greet her on her way ;
 'It is no wonder,' said the lords,
 'She is more beautiful than day.'

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
 She in her poor attire was seen :
 One praised her ancles, one her eyes,
 One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
 So sweet a face, such angel grace,
 In all that land had never been :
 Cophetua sware a royal oath :
 'This beggar maid shall be my queen !'

THE EAGLE.

FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with crooked hands ;
 Close to the sun in lonely lands,
 Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
 He watches from his mountain walls,
 And like a thunderbolt he falls.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and leave
 Yon orange sunset waning slow :
 From fringes of the faded eve,
 O, happy planet, eastward go ;
 Till over thy dark shoulder glow
 Thy silver sister-world, and rise
 To glass herself in dewy eyes
 That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
 Dip forward under starry light,
 And move me to my marriage-morn,
 And round again to happy night.

COME not, when I am dead,
 To drop thy foolish tears upon my
 grave,
 To tamper round my fallen head,
 And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst
 not save.
 There let the wind sweep and the plover
 cry ;
 But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
 I care no longer, being all unblest :
 Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of
 Time,
 And I desire to rest.
 Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where
 I lie :
 Go by, go by.

THE LETTERS.

I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,
 A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,
 I peer'd athwart the chancel pane
 And saw the altar cold and bare.
 A clog of lead was round my feet,
 A band of pain across my brow ;
 'Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet
 Before you hear my marriage vow '

II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song
 That mock'd the wholesome human
 heart,
 And then we met in wrath and wrong,
 We met, but only meant to part.
 Full cold my greeting was and dry ;
 She faintly smiled, she hardly moved ;
 I saw with half-unconscious eye
 She wore the colours I approved.

III.

She took the little ivory chest,
 With half a sigh she turn'd the key,
 Then raised her head with lips comrest,
 And gave my letters back to me.
 And gave the trinkets and the rings,
 My gifts, when gifts of mine could
 please ;
 As looks a father on the things
 Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

IV

She told me all her friends had said ;
 I raged against the public liar ;
 She talk'd as if her love were dead,
 But in my words were seeds of fire.

'No more of love ; your sex is known .
 I never will be twice deceived.
 Henceforth I trust the man alone,
 The woman cannot be believed.

V.

'Thio' slander, meanest spawn of Hell—
 And women's slander is the worst,
 And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
 Thio' you, my life will be accurst.'
 I spoke with heat, and heat and force,
 I shook her breast with vague alarms—
 Like torrents from a mountain source
 We rush'd into each other's arms.

VI.

We parted : sweetly gleam'd the stars,
 And sweet the vapour-braided blue
 Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,
 As homeward by the church I drew.
 The very graves appear'd to smile,
 So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells ;
 'Dark porch,' I said, 'and silent aisle,
 There comes a sound of marriage bells.'

THE VISION OF SIN.

I.

I HAD a vision when the night was late :
 A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.
 He rode a horse with wings, that would
 have flown,
 But that his heavy rider kept him down.
 And from the palace came a child of sin,
 And took him by the curls, and led him in,
 Where sat a company with heated eyes,
 Expecting when a fountain should arise :
 A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—
 As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
 Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and
 capes—
 Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid
 shapes,
 By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,
 and piles of grapes.

II.

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,
 Gathering up from all the lower ground ;

Narrowing in to where they sat assembled
 Low voluptuous music winding trembled,
 Wov'n in circles : they that heard it sigh'd,
 Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,
 Swung themselves, and in low tones replied ;

Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
 Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;
 Then the music touch'd the gates and died ;
 Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
 Storm'd in o'bs of song, a growing gale,
 Till thronging in and in, to where they waited,

As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,
 The strong tempestuous treble throb'd
 and palpitated ;

Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
 Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
 Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
 Flung the torrent rainbow round :
 Then they started from their places,
 Moved with violence, changed in hue,
 Caught each other with wild grimaces,
 Half-invisible to the view,
 Wheeling with precipitate paces
 To the melody, till they flew,
 Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
 Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
 Like to Furies, like to Graces,
 Dash'd together in blinding dew :
 Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
 The nerve-dissolving melody -
 Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-
 tract,

That girt the region with high cliff and
 lawn :

I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
 Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
 God made Himself an awful rose of dawn,
 Unheeded : and detaching, fold by fold,
 From those still heights, and, slowly
 drawing near,

A vapour heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
 Came floating on for many a month and
 year,

Unheeded : and I thought I would have
 spoken,

And warn'd that madman ere it grew too
 late :

But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine
 was broken,

When that cold vapour touch'd the palace
 gate,

And link'd again. I saw within my head
 A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as
 death,

Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,
 And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

IV.

' Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !
 Here is custom come your way ;
 Take my brute, and lead him in,
 Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

' Bitter barmaid, waning fast !
 See that sheets are on my bed ;
 What ! the flower of life is past :
 It is long before you wed.

' Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,
 At the Dragon on the heath !
 Let us have a quiet hour,
 Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

' I am old, but let me drink ;
 Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
 I remember, when I think,
 That my youth was half divine

Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,
 When a blanket wraps the day,
 When the rotten woodland drops,
 And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

' Sit thee down, and have no shame,
 Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :
 What care I for any name ?
 What for order or degree ?

' Let me screw thee up a peg :
 Let me loose thy tongue with wine :
 Callest thou that thing a leg ?
 Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

' Thou shalt not be saved by works :
 Thou hast been a sinner too :
 Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,
 Empty scarecrows, I and you !

' Fill the cup, and fill the can .
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

' We are men of ruin'd blood ;
Therefore comes it we are wise.
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy-flies.

' Name and fame ! to fly sublime
Thro' the courts, the camps, the
schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Banded by the hands of fools.

' Friendship !—to be two in one—
Let the canting liar pack !
Well I know, when I am gone,
How she mouths behind my back.

' Virtue !—to be good and just—
Every heart, when sifted well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

' O ! we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbour's wife.

' Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

' Drink, and let the parties rave :
They are fill'd with idle spleen ;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

' He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant's power ;
And the tyrant's cruel glee
Forces on the fiercer hour.

' Fill the can, and fill the cup .
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

' Greet her with applausive breath,
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

' No, I love not what is new ;
She is of an ancient house :
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

' Let her go ! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs,
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

' Drink to lofty hopes that cool—
Visions of a perfect State :
Drunk we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

' Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

' Fear not thou to loose thy tongue ;
Set thy hoary fancies free ;
What is loathsome to the young
Savours well to thee and me.

' Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

' Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance ;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

' Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

' Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads :
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

'You are bones, and what of that ?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

'Death is king, and Vivat Rex !
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam—if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones.

'No, I cannot praise the fife
In your eye—nor yet your lip :
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

'Lo ! God's likeness—the ground-plan—
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor framed :
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed !

'Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath !
Drink to heavy Ignorance !
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

'Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near :
What ! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

'Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

'Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !
Dregs of life, and lees of man :
Yet we will not die forlorn.'

v.

The voice grew faint: there came a
further change :
Once more uprose the mystic mountain-
range :
Below were men and hoises pierced with
worms,
And slowly quickening into lower forms ;
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of
dross,
Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd
with moss.

Then some one spake : 'Behold ! it was
a crime
Of sense avenged by sense that wore with
time.'

Another said : 'The crime of sense
became

The crime of malice, and is equal blame.'
And one : 'He had not wholly quench'd
his power ;

A little grain of conscience made him
sour'

At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, 'Is there any hope ?'
To which an answer peal'd from that high
land,

But in a tongue no man could understand ;
And on the glimmering limit far with-
dawn

God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.

TO ———,

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

'Cursed be he that moves my bones.'
Shakespeare's Epitaph.

You might have won the Poet's name,
If such be worth the winning now,
And gain'd a laurel for your brow
Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;

But you have made the wiser choice,
A life that moves to gracious ends
Thro' troops of unrecording friends,
A deedful life, a silent voice :

And you have miss'd the irreverent doom
Of those that wear the Poet's crown :
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die,
Nor leave his music as of old,
But round him ere he scarce be cold
Begins the scandal and the cry :

'Proclaim the faults he would not show :
Break lock and seal : betray the trust .
Keep nothing sacred : 'tis but just
The many-headed beast should know.'

Ah shameless ! for he did but sing
 A song that pleased us from its worth ;
 No public life was his on earth,
 No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best :
 His worst he kept, his best he gave.
 My Shakespeare's curse on clown and
 knave
 Who will not let his ashes rest !

Who make it seem more sweet to be
 The little life of bank and brier,
 The bird that pipes his lone desire
 And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud
 And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
 For whom the carrion vulture waits
 To tear his heart before the crowd !

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls
 Of water, sheets of summer glass,
 The long divine Peneian pass,
 The vast Akroeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
 With such a pencil, such a pen,
 You shadow forth to distant men,
 I read and felt that I was there :

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
 And track'd you still on classic ground,
 I grew in gladness till I found
 My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
 And glisten'd—here and there alone
 The broad-limb'd Gods at random
 thrown
 By fountain-urns ;—and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
 Of cavern pillars ; on the swell
 The silver lily heaved and fell ;
 And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
 By dancing rivulets fed his flocks
 To him who sat upon the rocks,
 And fluted to the morning sea.

BREAK, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
 And I would that my tongue could utter
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
 That he shouts with his sister at play !
 O well for the sailor lad,
 That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on
 To their haven under the hill ;
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
 And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead
 Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
 He pass'd by the town and out of the
 street,
 A light wind blew from the gates of the
 sun,
 And waves of shadow went over the
 wheat,
 And he sat him down in a lonely place,
 And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
 That made the wild-swan pause in her
 cloud,
 And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
 The snake slept under a spray,
 The wild hawk stood with the down on
 his beak,
 And stared, with his foot on the prey,
 And the nightingale thought, 'I have
 sung many songs,
 But never a one so gay,
 For he sings of what the world will be
 When the years have died away.'